

RACIAL POLITICS AND SOCIAL POLICY IN URBAN CANADA

by

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Abstract

The dissertation presents findings from a comparative study of urban policies the provincial governments of Quebec and Ontario introduced simultaneously, yet independently, in the year of 2006. Its central purpose is to resolve an unexpected paradox between the two cases. In 2006, the two provinces launched new policies in direct response to crises of urban violence that were steeped in racial stereotypes of deviant young black males. In defiance of its reputation for progressive social policy, Quebec embarked on a disciplinary strategy of law enforcement and detention. In Ontario, the government broke from the history of neo-liberal cuts and injected new funds into social provision for low-income youth. To answer the puzzle, the study combines data from interviews with respondents who participated in the policy process in each province and archival material. Findings show that the causes of the policy change were roughly the same across the two provinces, and reflected a convergence between exogenous pressures and the interests of political institutions. In each case, well-publicized incidents of gun violence became “focusing events” that created a window of opportunity for advocates to push through their preferred policy. In Quebec, those advocates were police chiefs, who lobbied successfully for a crime-fighting strategy against “street gangs.” In Ontario, black Liberal politicians and black community organizations in Toronto were instrumental in framing the policy agenda around the need to tackle poverty, inequality, and racial discrimination. To explain the source of these discrepancies, the dissertation develops an explanatory frame that centers on the interaction between political institutions and black political incorporation. It argues that the history of multiculturalism, decentralization, black political mobilization, and multi-racial coalitions in Toronto created the context for black political actors to be represented in the policy process in

2005. In Quebec, black political mobilization remains low due to sub-state nationalism, centralization, and a politics of culture and ethnic identity that overrides race. The dissertation further concludes that Ontario's policy of youth development has been more conducive to solving problems of urban distress and racial inequality; in contrast, Quebec's policy of "street gangs" has reinforced negative racial stereotypes of black youth and racial inequality.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
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| CACCO | Coalition of African-Canadian Community Organizations |
| CJE | Centre Jeunesse Emploi |
| CLE | Centre Local d'Emploi |
| CPS | Community Safety Plan |
| JCA | Jamaican Canadian Association |
| MCYW | Ministry of Children and Youth Services |
| MPS | Ministry of Public Security |
| NCPC | National Crime Prevention Centre |
| NGO | Non-Profit Organization |
| PN | Priority Neighborhoods |
| PSI | Programme de suivi intensif |
| PYD | Positive Youth Development |
| SNS | Strong Neighborhoods Strategy |
| TDSB | Toronto District School Board |
| YOW | Youth Outreach Worker |
| YPI | Youth and Policing Initiative |

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background to the Study

Decades of quantitative research have shown quite convincingly that welfare states constitute one of the primary defenses against the corrosive impact of market-based income inequalities and poverty on whole societies and vulnerable population groups. Cross-national studies have revealed that the size and generosity of welfare states bear a strong, positive correlation with a wide range of population outcomes, including employment and educational attainment, socio-economic mobility, homeownership, feelings of subjective well-being, physical health, and levels of life expectancy (Crul and Mollenkopf 2012; Pratt and Godsey 2003; Rogers and Pridemore 2013; Zuberi 2006). Depending on the scope of redistribution, state policies can keep disadvantaged groups (e.g., single mothers, the disabled) from falling into poverty or allow low-wage workers to secure a foothold into the middle-class (Brady 2009; Zuberi 2006). In Canada, the expansion of income transfers and increases to the minimum wage since the 1970s have kept poverty rates from increasing among low-skilled workers and single mothers, despite the steady growth in income inequality and job polarization in the country. For reasons that remain poorly understood, these reforms have not been enough to keep the poverty rate from increasing among recent immigrants, who are now more educated than ever (Picot, Lou and Hou 2009). Relatively few Canadian studies have been conducted thus far to examine the effectiveness of social policies in remedying income inequalities due to race and immigration (Smith-Carrier and Mitchell 2015). Banting and Thompson (2016) conclude that racial income inequalities in Canada have remained high and persistent, largely because they have never been an explicit target of federal policy. The country's well-known multiculturalism policy has had

positive effects on the rate of immigrant citizenship acquisition and political participation; yet, its primary goal is to promote cultural equality and integration, not economic parity (Banting and Thompson 2016; Bloemraad 2005). Other federal policies developed to address employment equity, immigrant settlement, racism, and Aboriginal land rights and governance all fail to give due attention to racial inequalities in income and poverty in Canada.

Given this political backdrop, the purpose of the present study was to examine a straightforward empirical question: what is the current capacity of Canadian social policies to remedy racial inequalities in income and poverty? What are their strengths and shortcomings and in what ways must they be adapted to meet the challenges? In order to explore the relationship between social policies and racial inequality, the study created a comparison between two Canadian provinces— Quebec and Ontario—that embody the starkest variations between a sturdy and extensive welfare state (Quebec), and one that is leaner and less robust (Ontario). Starting in the mid-1990s, the two provinces moved into completely opposing directions on social policy: Quebec enlarged the welfare state to an extent never seen before, while Ontario underwent its most dramatic neo-liberal transition that saw the welfare state shrink to an unprecedented level. Research showed that as a result of Quebec’s larger welfare state, the incidence of poverty had fallen significantly since the mid-1990s, whereas in the rest of Canada it remained unchanged (Fortin 2010). Over the same time period, the rate of income inequality in Quebec had remained stable, while everywhere else in Canada it had increased (Fortin 2010). Thus, the study predicted that Quebec’s larger welfare state would be more effective in addressing urban poverty and racial inequality in comparison with Ontario’s neo-liberal welfare state.

A second purpose of the study was to examine the claim many in the academic community and non-profit sector in Toronto were expressing that a surge in urban violence among young black males in Toronto since the mid-1990s had been the unfortunate by-product of the neo-liberal cutback of the state, which had compounded already serious problems of poverty, income inequality, and racial residential segregation. Across Canada, Toronto is one of two Canadian cities, the other being Calgary, where income inequalities have been rising most rapidly and where they remain highest. At the time of the study in 2014, no crisis of urban violence seemed to be besetting young black males in Montreal. Hence, the study posited that the difference might be explained by the contrasts in their provincial social regimes. On the ground, reports indicated that low-income neighborhoods in Montreal were endowed with a higher density of public and community-based services than in Toronto. In the 1990s in Ontario, the Conservative administration had either eliminated or reduced the funding for non-profit organizations. In Quebec during the same period, the government moved ahead to grant increased recognition to non-profit organizations, by entering into formal service contracts with organizations and enhancing their access to stable funding (White 2012).

In sum, the goal of the present study was to examine the relationship between provincial social policy regimes in Quebec and Ontario and the well-being and opportunities of black youth growing up in low-income urban neighborhoods, specifically in Montreal and Toronto. A 12-month qualitative study was carried out in two well-matched neighborhoods in each setting. Among other criteria, the two neighborhoods were matched according to their rate of poverty, percentage of black families, and density of organizations and institutions. Within each neighborhood, multiple observations and informal and formal interviews were completed over a period of five months. A significant amount of time was spent visiting and participating in local

organizations so as to gain a grasp of the organizational scene and the flavor of local activities, and to chart the participation of black youth and their interactions with service providers.

Surprisingly, results of the study proved to be contradictory to the hypothesis. Compared with Montreal, the research site in Toronto featured a higher density and breadth of community services for young people, and black youth were more significantly engaged in daily after-school and weekend programs. Black youth were particularly well-represented at three sites in the Toronto neighborhood—one public, the other two non-profit—that were operating after-school activities during the week and on weekends. In Toronto, black youth described how they could to turn to local organizations to satisfy just about any need, whether it was for personal counseling, help writing a resume and applying for a job, participating in fun and leisurely activities with peers, getting professional training and internships, finding a summer camp, joining a sports team, receiving free tutoring and homework help, and working with an adult counsellor to write scholarship and college applications. In Montreal, opportunities for adolescents to build relationships with adult mentors and counselors were in shorter supply, as were services for academic support, college preparation, internships, and extra-curricular activities. In Toronto, black youth also said they felt well-surrounded and supported by caring adults and professionals, especially at the largest youth organization in the neighborhood, a Boys and Girls Club, where a large team of full-time youth workers was based, many of them black. A community worker at the Club described herself and her colleagues as “surrogate parents” for the youth, because they fulfilled a variety of roles in the daily lives of young people. In Montreal, black youth did not have the same number of community workers to turn to for support, guidance, and problem-solving. In Montreal, services for adolescents and young adults were more scattered across the neighborhood and tailored to the individual mandates and expertise of organizations. For

instance, youth employment services were available in one site, homework help for primary school children in another, while after-school recreational activities for high-school aged youth were spread across a handful of public and non-profit organizations. The most popular non-school program in the Montreal site was recreation and male sports teams, which left young adolescent girls particularly underserved. A couple of non-profit organizations, including one black-led organization, had created after-school programs specifically geared to young women and girls. One of the most innovative projects in the Montreal site was a student newspaper, run by a community organization operating in the basement of a local high school.

Another important contrast between the two sites was in the language that governed local youth programs; in Toronto, the key words were youth development and engagement, while in Montreal, the major object of youth programs was the prevention of “street gangs.” Compared with Toronto, the strengths of Montreal’s system of service delivery resided in the comparatively dense number of daycare centers and the services for families, which bear a direct relationship with Quebec’s policies of universal child care and early childhood development. In Toronto, parents and local community workers complained of a dearth of services for local families. Due to the shortage of state-subsidized services in the Toronto site, parents had little other option than to turn to the more expensive private sector for daycare.

A final and unexpected result of the study was the role of the local police, which was significantly more integrated into the local organizational scene in Montreal than Toronto. Due to the widely publicized controversies over racial profiling and the gang raids of the “Toronto Anti-Violence Strategy,” it was expected that black youth in Toronto would be more inclined to report problems with the police. That did not turn out to be the case. Indeed, a similar proportion of black male youth interviewed in each neighborhood reported cases of discrimination by the

police. In the Montreal site, the local police department was deeply involved in collaborations with service providers, including youth-centered organizations. In the Toronto site, police officers tended to be more removed and working in isolation from local organizations. The site chosen in Montreal was known for having developed a practice of “community policing” for some years, which would explain the police’s higher presence in community activities. Police officers in the Montreal site were even running independent after-school programs. One highly popular program run by a black police officer, a Boxing club, was closed under suspicious circumstances. After it closed, he and his white fellow police officer parted ways and established separate after-school programs in different parts of the neighborhood. Many young people in the neighborhood regretted that the Boxing Club had been closed and described the black police officer as someone who was well-liked and who was making a difference in their lives. In a separate qualitative study conducted on racial profiling and policing in the Montreal neighborhood, it was found that cases of discriminatory policing towards black youth remained high, despite the community policing (Livingstone et al. 2018). Results further showed that the policy on street gangs had aggravated racial profiling in the neighborhood, by reinforcing stereotypes of black male deviance and justifying an intensive degree of police presence in public spaces. A majority of the youth in the study had been stopped at least once by police officers, either for random questioning, identity checks, or minor infractions (Livingstone et al. 2018).

The multiple contradictions observed between the two neighborhoods begged for further analysis. Therefore, a second phase of research was undertaken in which to understand why Ontario’s neo-liberal state had yielded a more robust system of youth services in the neighborhood, while Quebec’s more progressive social policy regime had given way to a more

punitive and disciplinary set of policies towards black youth. A series of interviews was conducted in each province with politicians, legislators, bureaucrats, community organizations, and private foundations. In addition, archival data on the policy context were collected and analyzed. Three questions were formulated for Phase 2 of the study: 1) why did the two provinces embark on the policy change in 2006 and why were they both motivated to act in response to incidents of urban violence? 2) why did the two provinces opt for such contrasting solutions to the urban violence when the symptoms of the unrest were arguably similar? 3) why did the trajectory of the policy process deviate so sharply from the province's established social policy regime? For each province, the analysis described in the present dissertation proceeds in two stages: it first describes the causes of the policy change in 2006, and then moves onto examining the reasons for the policy variations and contradictions.

Findings from the second phase of the study revealed a number of intriguing similarities and differences between the two provinces. First, both provinces underwent a sudden reversal in policy in 2006 and, in both cases, it was due to highly-publicized outbursts of gun violence in which young black males were depicted as the prime perpetrators and victims. In 2006, the Ontario government broke with the history of neo-liberal cutbacks and introduced the *Youth Opportunity Strategies*, through which to increase the quantity and scope of after-school programs and improve employment and educational opportunities for low-income youth in Toronto and across the province. In Quebec in 2006, the provincial government opted for an entirely different solution and chose instead to concentrate on fighting "street gangs," with the lion's share of the resources going into law enforcement and youth detention.

To understand why the policy-making on the urban violence did not correspond with the province's social policy regime, the dissertation turns to the theoretical literature on the policy

process. It borrows from the literature on historical institutionalism, constructivism, and interest-based and actor-centered explanations for policy change. Based on that literature, the dissertation arrives at two separate and related arguments. Similar to previous studies, it concludes that the policy changes in each province were born out of a convergence between exogenous events and political and organizational interests. In each case, highly-publicized and explosive incidents of gun violence in urban areas became “focusing events” that generated a moral panic over black male deviance and crime and raised the pressure on authorities to respond and reassure the public that they were taking immediate action. The second argument is that the policy divergence between Ontario and Quebec in 2006 reflects the interaction between the culture and structure of local political institutions and the interest groups and perspectives they empower and favor over others. In each province, an entirely different cast of characters, institutions, and networks came together in the mid-2000s to shape the course of the policy-making. The most important contrast lies in the degree to which black political actors were represented (or not) in the policy process. In Ontario, black grassroots coalitions and black Liberal politicians played leading roles in advocating for policies that would address poverty, racism, unemployment, and the dearth of community services in low-income neighborhoods in Toronto. The combination of Ontario’s tradition of multiculturalism, decentralization in policy-making, a history of anti-racism organizing in Toronto, and black political representation in the Liberal party had long created openings for black political actors to intervene in policy debates and lobby authorities to implement race-conscious policies. In Quebec, black political mobilization and representation remains relatively low. Instead, police chiefs acted as the primary policy entrepreneurs in the mid-2000s and lobbied successfully for a crime-fighting agenda on “street gangs,” by which to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement to suppress disturbances in low-income

neighborhoods, re-assert its control in the face of resistance from local youth, and appease the public's anxieties about security. For reasons that are not fully understood, black community organizations in Montreal were excluded from deliberations over the policy on street gangs throughout its roughly 10-year existence, starting with Phase 1 of the plan in 2006 and into Phase 2, which began in 2010 and ended in 2014. The dissertation posits that the structures of sub-state nationalism, corporatism, and centralization in Quebec have together inhibited black political mobilization and coalition-building in Montreal. Thus, the dissertation argues that the most important determinant of the policy process on the urban violence was not the province's social policy regime, but rather its tradition of race policy. As the dissertation will explain in the chapters that follow, the racial politics and policies of the provincial government predicted whether or not a race-conscious approach to the violence was given consideration, and how and to what extent black political actors could participate in, and influence, the policy process.

While the findings of the study are consistent with comparative studies of race policies around the world, they upset the standard conclusions of the Canadian literature on the social policy regimes of Quebec and Ontario. Previous comparisons of Quebec and Ontario have concluded that Quebec's left-ward turn in 1996 was the result of a convergence between sub-state nationalism, a tradition of corporatism, and the vibrancy and power of left-wing social movements in the province (Béland and Lecours 2011; Dufour 2004; Haddow 2015; Noël 2013). The dissertation proposes that these are precisely the same factors that have inhibited progress on race policy in the province. Quebec's long-running nationalism movement has kept discussions of racial inequality and racism confined to debates about the preservation of the province's French language and culture. As a result, race and ethnicity are presumed to be proxies for culture, rather than causes of racial inequality and discrimination. An enduring tension between a

civic and ethnic vision of nationalism in Quebec has also impeded a constructive dialogue from taking place on the subject of racial inequality, as it perpetuates a seemingly intractable divide between the interests of the province's white Francophone majority and racial minorities and immigrants, who are presumed to lie outside the boundaries of Quebec's traditional community. Compared with Ontario, public policy in Quebec has yet to fully acknowledge racial and ethnic diversity as constitutive of the society rather than a trait of immigrants and "cultural outsiders."

One of the prime explanations for Quebec's more progressive social policies compared with Ontario focuses on the province's unique system of interest representation and the cross-class coalitions it has facilitated between nationalist politicians, business, unions, and social movements (Haddow 2015; Noël 2013; White 2012). What these accounts overlook, however, are the realities of racial diversity and inequality in the province; as a result, they underestimate the weaknesses of Quebec's system of corporatism and state-civil society relations in representing the needs and perspectives of disadvantaged groups.

The dissertation concludes that the structures of multiculturalism, decentralization, and racial minority political representation in Ontario have produced a more favorable setting for race-conscious policies than in Quebec. In Ontario, the political discourse has evolved through a constant, often conflictual, yet arguably productive dialogue between concepts of multiculturalism, race relations, and anti-racism. Longstanding multi-racial movements for social justice in Toronto have stretched the boundaries of traditional policy by exposing the limits of multiculturalism and forcing the state to acknowledge the centrality of power, racism, and institutional processes in the reproduction of racial inequality. The establishment in 2017 of a new Anti-Racism Directorate in Ontario is the fruit of a long struggle waged by black grassroots organizations and multi-racial advocacy coalitions in Toronto.

Findings of the study are consistent with previous comparative analyses of race policy in the United States and Europe. Research has shown there is generally no inherent or linear relationship between the social policies of the state and its positions on racial inequality and racism. Indeed, the two domains of policy are frequently contradictory and inconsistent. This is illustrated in the variations between the United States, France, and Britain (Lieberman 2005). Lieberman (2005) shows that the United States has gone farther than any other western country in enacting race-conscious policies, because of the decentralization in policy-making which has allowed the federated network of black civil rights organizations to intervene at different points in the policy process and move legislation on affirmative action forward. In contrast, the centralized states of France and Britain have stayed relatively immune to outside influences and produced less far-reaching race policies, despite their stronger social safety nets. One could easily draw a similar comparison between Ontario's decentralized and Liberal welfare state and Quebec's more centralized political system and social democratic underpinnings.

The present dissertation sets out to describe and explain the contradictions in the policy trajectories of Quebec and Ontario in 2006, using the data from Phase 2 of the study. Findings from Phase 1 of the study are briefly presented. Future publications will discuss those results in more detail. In the section that follows, the chapter reviews the empirical literature and conceptual schools of thought that were relied upon to form the analysis for the present dissertation. It pays particular attention to the body of work on historical institutionalism, constructivism, and actor and interest-based explanations for policy change. The chapter ends by introducing the organization of the dissertation and the subsequent chapters.

Perspectives on Policy-Making

Agenda-Setting

Policy change that is dramatic and sudden tends to be rare in the real world. In most cases, policy change occurs gradually over time and arises out of a convergence of multiple influences and a long-drawn out process of debate, negotiation, and conflict in which competing groups of political actors vie for control. When a sudden policy change does arise, it is usually prompted by some external shock or disruption to the system that upsets the status quo and compels actors to look for alternative solutions. Kingdon (1995) coined the term “focusing events” to refer to any abrupt, unpredictable, dramatic, and relatively rare event that raises concern about an issue that causes profound harm, or has the potential to cause harm, and subsequently casts a glare on the deficiencies of existing policy (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; Birkland 1998; Kingdon, 1995). A focusing event may be anything from an economic recession, an environmental disaster, a tragic accident, or a powerful political symbol that catapults an issue onto the top of the media headlines and the government’s priority list. While focusing events are not usually powerful enough on their own to stimulate policy change, they can alter the locus of political attention and propel action onto a problem that would otherwise go ignored (Kingdon 1995). Focusing events create what Kingdon (1995) calls a “policy window” for advocates to push for their preferred policy proposal. As policy windows remain temporary, policy entrepreneurs must immediately seize the moment before the crisis fades from view.

Generally speaking, a focusing event will only lead to policy change once it is joined with a willing policy entrepreneur and an established set of ideas or proposals that can quickly be

put under consideration (Kingdon 1995). Ideas must be floating around that policy entrepreneurs can tap into and develop. Policy entrepreneurs might either turn to legislation that is under discussion or has been lying dormant for years due to a lack of political will, or they may turn to outside experts for advice, such as think tanks, interest groups, policy communities, and advocacy coalitions. In his theory, Kingdon (1995) proposes that policy change arises out of the joining of three distinct and inter-dependent streams: a) a problem stream (often, though not always, prompted by a focusing event); b) a policy stream (i.e., an existing set of ideas, solutions, and policy proposals), and; c) a politics stream (i.e., the individuals or groups of actors who come on the scene to push for a particular choice of policy). Kingdon's (1995) theory offers a compelling explanation for understanding why and under what circumstances policy change happens suddenly and unexpectedly, as it did in Ontario and Quebec in 2006. Other well-known theories of policy change, namely Punctuated Equilibrium (Baumgartner and Jones 1993) and the Advocacy Coalition Framework (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994), are better at explaining change that is gradual, rather than abrupt.

In an article on the city of Toronto, Thompson and Wallner (2011) discuss the significance of the shooting death of a high school student in 2007 as a "focusing event" that created a policy window for local activists to advocate for an Afro-centric school, an idea that had been relegated to the back burner because of its failure to garner enough support. Thompson and Wallner (2011) argue that the death of Jordan Manners in 2007 sparked a policy debate in Toronto that turned the attention onto multiple and related issues of school safety, delinquency, and black students' higher school dropout rates. In the midst of that climate, the Toronto District School Board launched a public inquiry into Afro-centric schooling and black community advocates participated in the deliberations in order to make the case for their proposal. In 2008,

the School Board narrowly approved a bill for a three-year pilot project to establish an Afro-centric school (Thompson and Wallner 2011; Thompson and Thompson 2008).

Political crises often function to precipitate path-breaking and dramatic changes in social policy. In the United States, for example, the most ambitious period of growth and innovation in urban policy in 1960s coincided with the eruption of civil unrest across urban areas of the country. Media coverage of riots and black neighborhoods exploding in flames grabbed the attention of the public and focused attention on the dire problems of urban poverty and racial injustice (Baumgartner and Jones 1993). The Johnson administration responded to the unrest by asserting that the federal government had an obligation to fix the causes of urban discontent and improve living conditions for city residents. Out of this crisis moment came the ground-breaking legislation for the War on Poverty, model cities, subsidized housing, urban transportation, medical care for the poor, public works programs, and employment training.

Historical Institutionalism

In the scholarly literature, one of the major interpretive frameworks for understanding and explaining policy change, persistence, and variation is “historical institutionalism.” The term “institution” is used broadly to define “formal organizations and informal rules and procedures” that govern main political activities; this includes, though is not limited to, political parties, electoral rules, government bureaucracies, and unions (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992: 2). Institutions affect policy-making in a variety of ways: a) they regulate the channels by which policies are debated, considered, and enacted; b) they affect how groups come to define and interpret their perceived interests and the best ways to achieve them; c) they structure the terms

of the intellectual and conceptual debate over policy problems, and; d) they determine the likelihood that one solution (or idea) will be favored over others. In essence, institutions regulate the balance of power between competing groups of actors, organizations, and coalitions. Whether a policy proposal succeeds or fails will depend on the outcomes of the ideological and political struggle fought by competing coalitions of actors located within and outside the state (Steinmo et al. 1992).

Generally speaking, institutions impose constraints on the possibilities for, and scope of, policy change; however, they can also be catalysts for reform. Due to their inherent bias towards stability and standardization, institutions generally constrict the possibilities for innovation and lead reforms down predictable paths. At the same time, institutions can create opportunities for actors to voice their interests and lobby legislators to accept a new version of facts and solutions (Immergut 1998). In her analysis of employment policy in the United States, Weir (1992) claims it has always represented a form “bounded innovation,” and largely because of the power of business lobbies who have been opposed to any policy that is not market-friendly. Thus, policy change necessarily always involves a compromise between the forces of resistance and change.

The theory of historical institutionalism has been particularly useful in explaining the surprising persistence of European welfare states in the face of globalization, growing economic insecurity, and neo-liberalism (Immergut 1998; Pierson 2001). Cross-national studies have shown that the extent and form of welfare retrenchment in Europe has varied depending on the nature of the political institutions of the country and the relative power of interest groups. Even though the power of left parties and unions has declined, new groups of lobbies have been formed by beneficiaries of the welfare state—pensioners, the disabled, and health care users—who have fought to keep programs in place (Pierson 1996). In countries as diverse as Sweden,

France, and Germany the institutional legacies of the welfare state have produced “lock-in” effects that systematically prevent any dramatic re-ordering of the welfare state from taking place, unless it is agreed upon by unions, business, and beneficiaries (Pierson 2001).

In research on race policy in the US, much has been written about the role of decentralization in policy-making in creating opportunities for state and non-state actors to enter into and influence the policy process. Depending on the circumstances, federalism has worked either to promote or impede change. When the New Deal was being written in the 1930s, politicians in the southern US demanded that the Social Security Act exclude agricultural employees and domestic workers, because these were jobs held primarily by African-Americans. Southern politicians feared the Act would loosen their grip on black labor by granting new freedoms to African-American workers. The Southern states wielded such enormous influence over the negotiations for the New Deal that the Act would not have passed had the labor restrictions not been approved (Lieberman 1995). When the balance of forces shifted in the post-war period, the same structure of federalism gave civil rights activists and reformist politicians the opportunity to lobby for new race-based legislation. The ground-breaking civil rights statutes, including the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, and affirmative action, would not have come about had it not been for the pressure brought to bear on the federal government by civil rights organizations, black politicians, and their Liberal allies in government (McAdam 1982).

An essential factor to consider in studying institutions is not just the way they reproduce and regulate class conflicts, but also how they shape racial and gender inequalities and power struggles. In one study, Hawkesworth (2003) presents an inside look at how processes of racial and gender discrimination in the US Congress create substantial obstacles for women of color to perform their roles and influence policy. Black congresswomen rarely get their own initiatives

passed, because of the lack of support or outright opposition from their more numerous male colleagues. When repeal of the “Temporary Assistance to Needy Families” (TANF) was being debated in 1996, black women and other women of color in Congress mounted a well-organized effort to stop the legislation from being terminated. When the repeal was eventually voted in, these women turned their attention towards getting provisions approved that would have eased the transition for women to move from welfare to full-time work, for example, by making subsidized childcare and professional training available to recipients. These provisions were ultimately rejected, as the coalition was unable to persuade the majority of Democratic and Republican party members who were in favor of the repeal (Hawkesworth 2003).

Research shows that racial and gender representation in politics has variable effects on the pathways of policy change. Studies of state-level politics in the US have found that the passage of legislation geared towards under-represented and marginalized groups—be it women, racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled, or members of the LBGTQ community—is greater where these groups have allies in positions of power. Quantitative studies have found a significant positive relationship between the percentage of African-American in legislative positions and the odds a policy will be passed that is favorable to African-American voters (Griffin 2011; Preuhs 2006; Thomas 1991). Compared with their white colleagues, African-American politicians are more inclined to vote for policies that are popular among black voters (Bratton, Haynie, and Reingold 2006; Griffin 2014). Similar findings emerge when gender is examined (Thomas 1991). Female legislators are more likely than males to initiate and vote for policies that protect women’s interests.

Constructivism

The constructivist perspective on public policy has emerged and developed partly in response to the limitations of historical institutionalism in explaining the causes of policy change and in accounting for the impact of ideas in the policy-making process. For the constructivist, ideas bear an independent impact on the policy process (Béland and Cox 2011). Any substantive change in policy, especially one that is sudden rather than incremental, necessarily involves a shift in ideas or perspective on a given issue or policy (Béland 2009; Berman 2001). By examining the role of ideas in the policy process, it is possible to gain a more complete grasp of why change occurs in the first place, why it takes one direction and not another, and how policies move from the stage of conception, to design, and adoption (Béland and Cox 2011; Berman 2001). It is also crucial to note that even while ideas are often associated with a change in policy, they can also serve as constraints. The ideas that are dominant within an institution, group, or society, for example, may lend some schemes more legitimacy and value than others, while limiting the range of policy options put under consideration (Béland 2009).

In the constructivist perspective, policy-making is viewed as an entirely socially constructed process; nothing exists “out there” in the real world that is not bound by cultural and social conventions. As Hay (2011) articulates, even actors’ self-interests are perceptions of interests, rather than purely objective and widely-agreed upon facts. Political actors may also be influenced by non-material interests and values. For instance, actors may possess non-economic beliefs (e.g., socialist, conservative, and religious fundamentalist) that trump or come into conflict with their economic status (e.g., factory worker, teacher, farmer). Like institutions, ideas can influence the policy-making in multiple ways. An idea can be anything from a broad general

discourse and set of cultural beliefs (e.g., equality, liberalism, or socialism), to more specific and narrow programmatic concepts and strategies (e.g., anti-poverty and employment) (Béland 2009). In the literature, ideas have been variously defined as policy paradigms, policy narratives, frames, repertoires, programmatic ideas, and discourses (Berman 2013; Boswell, Geddes, and Scholten 2011; Campbell 2002). In the current study, the word “idea” is a broad term that encompasses broad-based ideologies (i.e., inter-culturalism and nationalism in Quebec versus multiculturalism in Ontario), cultural and technical constructs for social problems (urban violence and poverty), and policy prescriptions (enforcement versus prevention).

Cross-national studies of European welfare states have found that differences in cultural beliefs about the role families vis-à-vis the state can partly explain the variations in the extent of income redistribution (Esping-Andersen 1990). In social democratic Scandinavia, child care and maternity leave policies have grown out of a belief that the state bears a responsibility for the care and well-being of families (Campbell 2002). In corporatist Germany, such policies have not emerged, due to the belief that families can take care of their own needs. In a cross-national study of immigration policies, Favell (1998) proposes the concept of “philosophies of integration” to explain why Britain and France have adopted contrasting immigration regimes. The color-blind policies of France are consistent with the country’s Republican philosophy, in which immigrants are expected to assimilate national ideals of citizenship and set aside their particular ethnic and cultural identities, be they religious or other (Lépinard 2014). In Britain, in contrast, a policy of multiculturalism and minority rights protection was easily imported from the United States, because it was seen as compatible with the country’s tradition of Liberalism.

In more practical terms, ideas may take the form of “road maps” or blueprints that policy-makers rely on to sort through confusing and uncertain situations (Berman 2001; Bleich 2003).

In a seminal article, Hall (1993) contends that the shift from Keynesianism to monetarism in Britain in the 1970s was spawned by a period of “social learning” in which monetarism appeared to be the only practical solution to the financial difficulties of the period. The 1970 era of economic instability, rising inflation, and economic stagnation raised doubts about the effectiveness of Keynesianism. Monetarism “became the principal challenger to Keynesian doctrine, in significant part because it was the most coherent and plausible alternative at the time (Hall 1993: 286). In analyzing the trajectory of race policies in Britain and France, Bleich (2003) claims the two countries have maintained their distinct paths over decades, because national ideals about race and citizenship have become “cognitive frames” that policy-makers and bureaucrats rely on to resolve everyday problems of discrimination and anti-discrimination. The author claims the cognitive frame in France is color-blind and assimilationist, while in Britain it is more explicitly race-conscious (Bleich 2003). Finally, ideas may function as “discursive frames” that political actors use to advocate for, legitimate, make palatable, or even discredit specific policies (Béland and Cox 2011). In Canada and the United States, politicians have stirred opposition to the welfare state by employing discursive frames that paint welfare as a system rife with abuses and liable to create a culture of dependency and aversion to work.

Actors, Groups, and Networks

For policy-making to take effect, and for institutions and ideas to have any influence, they must be led by people. As Béland and Cox (2011: 2) articulate, “there is no politics without human agency.” The policy-making process typically attracts and involves networks of individuals and groups situated within or outside the state who share a common interest or

concern with an issue of policy. Among state actors, the most influential groups are ministers and bureaucrats, with legislators (particularly in parliamentary systems) playing a secondary role (Howlett, Ramesh, and Perl 2009). As indicated earlier, a policy proposal often gains traction once it is championed by a “policy entrepreneur” (Berman 2003). Policy entrepreneurs “could be in or out of government, in elected or appointed positions, in interest groups or research organizations.” Their defining characteristic “is their willingness to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money – in the hope of a future return” (Kingdon 1995: 122).

In designing policy, state agencies will often listen to and follow the advice of non-state actors, which may include think tanks, academics, professional associations, business lobbies, unions, social movements, foundations, and non-profit organizations. Exchanges between the state and non-state actors may occur spontaneously or haphazardly, as when legislators react to the pressure of social movements; it can also take place through more organized channels, such as in the form of state-sponsored expert committees, scientific investigations, and conferences (Dobrowolsky and Saint-Martin 2005; Hudson and Graefe 2001; Scholten and Timmermans 2020; Scott, Hopkins, Newman and McLaughlin 2006). Dobrowolsky and Saint-Martin (2003) describe how national authorities in Britain and Canada reformed policies on child poverty in consultation with local think tanks, private foundations, and NGOs. Unlike Canada, however, women’s groups in Britain were more successful in persuading the government to integrate the needs of women into the policy, whereas in Canada, these groups were ignored and kept out of the policy process. Dobrowolsky and Saint-Martin (2003) conclude that non-profit organizations in Britain were more influential because of their closer and more cooperative relationships with the state than in Canada, where these relationships have been marred by conflict and contention.

A variety of terms have been proposed to capture the forms of informal and formal communication that happen between the state and non-state actors such as, policy network, policy communities, issue networks, policy sub-systems, advocacy coalition, and epistemic communities (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; John 2012; Marsh and Rhodes 1992; Sabatier and Weible 2007). Despite the variation in labels, there seems to be a general agreement in the literature that a “policy network”—to use the generic term—usually forms around a particular issue or sub-area of policy, be it child poverty, agriculture, energy, housing, transportation, or health. Within a sub-area, the members of the network may cooperate loosely and informally, forming what some have called an “issue network.” In an issue network, members may share a common interest in an issue, though not necessarily the same view on the policy goals or strategies (Rhodes 2006). Alternatively, a policy network may also operate as a tightly-integrated group of actors, who interact regularly in a “policy community” or “advocacy coalition” and agree on the goals and methods to pursue (Sabatier and Weible 2007). Networks of academics, or “epistemic communities,” may also exert an influence on policy and behave in ways that either advance or deviate from the state’s position (Scholten and Timmermans 2010).

Organization of Chapters

The next chapter of the dissertation moves into the methodology for the study. It describes in detail the research questions and techniques that were developed for Phase 1 and 2 of the study. Chapter Three presents an analytical overview of the policy process in Ontario during 2005 and 2006, and offers a series of explanations for the timing of the policy change and for the design. Chapter Four shifts the attention onto Quebec and analyzes the causes of the

policy change in that province in 2006, in addition to the factors that bore a direct and indirect impact on the policy design. In Chapter Five, the findings from the two provinces are blended together and compared. The chapter provides an explanatory frame for understanding the policy divergence between the two provinces; it focuses attention on the role of local political institutions, ideas, interest groups, and social movements in influencing the Ontario government to embrace a race-conscious policy and in driving authorities in Quebec to adopt a color-blind solution that ignored racial inequality and racism. Chapter Five makes the theoretical and empirical argument that the main factor that distinguishes Ontario from Quebec is the role of black political actors in the policy process. As the dissertation will show, black political actors were mobilized into coalitions in the early 2000s that lobbied energetically for a structural solution to the violence, one that would deal with poverty, inequality, racial discrimination, and government cuts to social programs. In Montreal, black political actors were neither visible nor mobilized during the policy process. Instead, policy chiefs took the driver's seat and advocated for a crime-fighting agenda targeting "street gangs." The dissertation offers some tentative explanations for the discrepancies in black political mobilization across the two provinces. Finally, Chapter Six summarizes the findings and conclusions of the dissertation.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The methodology for the dissertation combines an in-depth study of two comparable low-income neighborhoods with an analysis of the policy process that took place in response to the urban violence in Quebec and Ontario. In Quebec, the period under study stretches from 2004 to 2006, and in Ontario it covers a slightly shorter time span, from 2005 to 2006. Each component of study was assigned its own research questions, methods, and analytical frames. Phase 1 concentrated on the organizational context of low-income neighborhoods and the participation of black youth in two carefully selected settings across the two provinces. Phase 2 looks back to the period of the mid-2000s and explores the factors that caused the policy change to occur in each province and why it took the specific direction that it did, culminating in the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* in Ontario and the *Street Gang Intervention* in Quebec (or the “Plan d’intervention sur les gangs de rue” in French). For simplicity, the terms youth strategy or youth policy are employed in the dissertation to refer to the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* of Ontario. For Quebec, the terminology moves between *Street Gang Intervention* and street gang policy.

Phase 1: The Neighborhood Comparison

Phase one of the study consisted of a qualitative analysis of the organizational context of low-income urban neighborhoods in Ontario and Quebec, specifically in Montreal and Toronto, where most black Canadians reside. For a number of years, black community leaders in Toronto had been expressing concerns about the disastrous effects of rising poverty and cutbacks to social services for disadvantaged black youth, many who were falling victim to gun violence. Among

Liberal and left-leaning observers, the crisis of urban violence was seen as a direct result of the neo-liberal assault on the welfare state in Ontario during the 1990s, which had exacerbated an already serious problem of spiraling income inequality and poverty in Toronto. Using the literature on welfare states as a point of departure, the study sought to evaluate the claim that Ontario's rollback of social programs had worsened circumstances for black youth and caused the crisis of violence. It did so by comparing the province of Ontario with Quebec, where the welfare state had grown rather than contracted during the 1990s. By matching one low-income neighborhood in Toronto with a similar one in Montreal, the goal was to assess the effects of one system where social provision has become sparse and one where it remains robust.

At the outset, the neighborhood case studies were designed to answer the following three basic questions: 1) how do local institutions and organizations shape the well-being and social integration of young black males in late adolescence (15-19 years) who reside in low-income neighborhoods?; 2) to what extent do local systems of social provision attenuate or accentuate the consequences of racial inequality and poverty for black youth?; 3) how do neighborhood institutions and organizations influence general patterns of youth participation and integration in the neighborhoods? In general, the aim was to document and examine the full panoply of institutional and organizational resources in the neighborhood and the ways by which they reach and engage black families and young people. Knowing the troubled history of police relations with black youth in Montreal and Toronto, the study sought to explore black youths' relationships not only with social services, but also with law enforcement in the neighborhoods.

The methodology for the neighborhood study consisted of observations and qualitative interviews with youth, parents, and local institutions and organizations. The fieldwork was planned for twelve months, so as to leave enough time to observe and capture the social and

organizational dynamics of the two neighborhoods. The 12 months were to be divided into six months within each site, though delays in the start-up phase in Montreal in September 2014 forced the time in Toronto to be cut short by a month. The research took place in Montreal between September 2014 and March 2015, and in Toronto from April to August 2015. In each setting, the first three to four weeks were spent getting acquainted with the neighborhood and the organizations, and meeting and interacting with young people in after-school programs. In both sites, it took some time and effort to find and recruit young black males willing and interested to participate in interviews. Participants were gradually recruited over a period of three to four months in each neighborhood. The original goal was to interview each young person twice over the twelve months; however, this was only feasible in the Montreal site. In the Toronto site, the second interviews were cancelled due to time constraints. When the research began in Toronto in April, only five months remained for the fieldwork. In the Montreal site, a research assistant hired for the study carried out the second interviews in the spring and summer of 2015, while I undertook the fieldwork in Toronto. A research assistant was also hired to do the youth interviews in Toronto, and he completed them on his own. It so happened the research assistant in Toronto was a fellow PhD student who had been leading a qualitative study on young black males in the city. The research assistant in Montreal had recently graduated with a Bachelor's degree and was working for community organizations when he was recruited. Due to his relative inexperience in qualitative interviewing, the research assistant in Montreal was given some basic training and participated in and observed the interviews in the first wave before taking over the responsibility of holding the second interviews on his own. Black males were purposely hired to assist with the interviews because of the belief that black male adolescents would feel more at ease opening up to another male than a female. In Montreal, I conducted about half of the

interviews with male youth, while my research assistant took care of the other half. In Toronto, the research assistant was responsible for the full set of youth interviews, while I handled the interviews with parents and local service providers.

Site Selection

To examine the significance of the province's social policy regime in shaping the organizational make-up of low-income neighborhoods, the study sites were chosen to reflect the systemic variations known to exist between Ontario and Quebec. In other words, the neighborhood in Toronto exhibited a low density of community-based organizations, whereas the site in Montreal possessed a relatively high density of institutions and organizations. In every other respect, the two neighborhoods were selected be as close as possible, starting with their socio-economic and demographic characteristics. By varying the level of organizational density, while keeping other factors equal, the assumption was that it would be easier to isolate the precise impact of neighborhood organizational density on the lives of young people, and to rule out (or at least minimize) the possibility of competing explanations. As Zussman (2004) has suggested, in small-n comparative studies one may select two or more cases that embody the hypothesized mechanisms in sharp relief: in this case, the density of local organizations. By employing this approach, one might more confidently assess if (or how) a study's theoretical assumptions play out in real-life settings or if they are contradicted, and altered, by the evidence.

It must be noted that certain fundamental differences between the two sites could not be overcome, most importantly, language. The province of Ontario is a primarily English-speaking province, while Quebec is mostly Francophone. In fact, these linguistic differences between the

two provinces partly explain the variations in their social policy regimes, as Chapter Five will explain. Despite this, the linguistic profile of the provinces does affect the composition of the local black population. Naturally, French-speaking black immigrants have tended to settle in Quebec, whereas English-speaking immigrants prefer Ontario. Due to the French language, Quebec attracts a larger share of immigrants from North Africa compared with Ontario. In addition, Ontario is home to older generations of black Canadians, among whom we find the descendants of African-Americans who fled the United States on the underground railroad.

Table 1 summarizes the key demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the two neighborhoods. For the purposes of the study, the two neighborhoods had to have comparable proportions of black households. In the Toronto site, the percentage of black residents came to 23%, while in the Montreal site it reached 32%. As a group, blacks constitute around 7% of Toronto's population in 2006, whereas in Montreal it falls to 3%. In Toronto, several neighborhoods are home to significant proportions of black households and any one of them could have been suitable for the study. In Montreal, on the other hand, only two neighborhoods in the city possess equally large percentages of black residents. The one neighborhood out of the two that was selected for the study exhibited a higher density of local organizations and institutions. In addition to their racial diversity, the two neighborhoods were selected to have matching levels of low income. In Toronto, 30% of the population in the neighborhood was living below the "Low-Income Cut-Off" (LICO) of Statistics Canada; in the Montreal site, the percentage was 35%. It must be noted that the data below were obtained from local organizations and derived from the National Household Survey (NHS) of 2011. In the scientific community, concerns remain about the under-sampling in the NHS of First Nations, racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, and residents of small census agglomerations (Grant 2013).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Neighborhoods

| | Toronto site | Montreal site |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Persons below the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) | 30% | 35% |
| Lone-parents | 20% | 43% |
| Black residents | 23% | 32% (approx. 17,565) |
| Racial minorities | 62% | 71% |
| Immigrant-born | 51% | 49% |
| Unemployment | 14% | 16% |
| Education | 22% without high school | 35% without high school |
| Total pop | 23,042 | 54, 210 |

Source: 2011 Canadian Census.

As Table 1 reveals, the proportions of immigrants and racial minorities across the two sites were fairly equal. The extent of racial and ethnic diversity was especially pronounced in the Toronto site. In the Montreal site, the majority of black residents belonged to the first- and second-generation of the Haitian diaspora, the province's largest group of black immigrants. African immigrants had slowly been trickling into the neighborhood, yet remained less numerous. Prior to the arrival of Haitian immigrants, the neighborhood had long been an enclave of the Italian-Canadian community, and its presence remains visible to this day. In more recent years, the percentage of immigrants from North Africa, South and East Asia, and Latin America has gradually increased. In the Toronto study site, the black population was more heterogeneous

than in Montreal; it included immigrants from English and French-speaking Africa and the Caribbean (i.e., Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago), and a small number of native-born blacks. The rest of the population was even more culturally and ethnically diverse. It included a community of First Nations Canadians, many white Canadians, in addition to immigrants from countries and regions around the globe such as, the Philippines, Middle East, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, China, and Eastern and Western Europe. In Montreal and Toronto, the racial and ethnic groups appeared to be living peaceably together, although inter-racial conflicts (while rare) were known to have flared up between high school students.

As indicated above, the organizational density of the two site sites was matched to fit the study's hypothesis about welfare states. Given Quebec's larger welfare state, the Montreal site was endowed with a higher density of community services than the Toronto site. The Toronto site was situated in what are called the "inner suburbs" of the city, known for their high levels of poverty, concentrations of racial minorities and recent immigrants, and weak social service infrastructure. When the inner suburbs were built in the post-war period, they were expected to serve as "bedroom communities" for working-class and middle-class homeowners who would commute by car to and from work. As the cost of living in central Toronto has risen, an increasing number of low-income households have moved into the area, attracted by the lower cost of rent in the high-rise apartment complexes. The neighborhood selected for the study had several of these low and high-rise apartment complexes. A number of these complexes have been converted into subsidized housing, managed by the Toronto Community Housing. Indeed, reports indicated the Toronto site had the highest density of low-income public housing across the entire city. Despite their high levels of low income, the inner suburbs remain physically segregated from the city and, therefore, removed from most public and community services.

Public transportation has been a major source of complaint, because of the long commutes and multiple buses residents must take to get to and from work (Cowen and Parlette 2011).

At the time of the study, the site in Toronto had about a dozen public and non-profit organizations that were open daily, visible from the street, and involved in a variety of activities and services. Many other agencies from outside the neighborhood would conduct “satellite” services on a part-time basis at one of the main non-profit agencies, which had become known as the neighborhood’s local “hub.” Given the neighborhood’s recent influx of low-income renters, it was only in the 1990s that community organizations and public agencies began to establish themselves in the neighborhood, after a team of public health workers and nurses came together and scrambled to meet the pressing needs of a refugee community that had been forced to settle in a local motel. The plans for the “hub” arose at that time, and the idea was that it would be simpler to create one central location where residents could access a variety of services, and where public and non-profit agencies could hold activities in the neighborhood without having to move their operations or invest in costly rents and the maintenance of premises.

In the Montreal neighborhood, around 60 public and non-profit organizations existed, including several of the state-run universal programs such as, the “Centre Jeunesse Emploi” (CJE), the “Centre Local d’Emploi” (CLE), a community clinic, and recreation centers. In addition, many of these services had been in operation for some time. For example, one of the longest-running black organizations in the neighborhood had been in place since the 1970s.

Despite their unequal levels of organizational density, the two sites were both reputed in their respective cities for being neighborhoods where local organizations were doing an exceptional job of cooperating together, despite the increasing pressure to compete for funding. In meetings with key informants in each city, it was mentioned that the neighborhood had

acquired a reputation for being a place where local leaders demonstrated an exemplary capacity for cooperation, creativity and innovation. For these reasons, it was assumed that the two sites would be appropriate examples for comparison, because one could expect that local leaders in each neighborhood would have a particular talent for attracting funding and staying at the leading edge of policy. In other words, if one were to look for evidence where public policy is being implemented as intended, it would be in these neighborhoods rather than in others.

Another criteria for the site selection was the neighborhood's history with incidences of violence and homicides. Media reports indicated the research sites in Montreal and Toronto had both been struck by outbreaks of gun violence in the pivotal year of 2005. In Toronto, the study site was one of four neighborhoods that became the focal point for the controversial "Toronto Anti-Violence Strategy" in 2005. Residents recalled a period in the 2000s decade when the neighborhood was ravaged by conflicts between rival criminal networks. In Montreal, the site was also the focal point for the implementation of the anti-gang squads of the *Street Gang Intervention* in 2005. Over the years, the neighborhood had gained a reputation for being the scene of older and established crime networks and a new generation of youth gangs.

Several differences between the two research sites are worth noting. First, their population sizes were uneven. The population in the Montreal site was a nearly double the size of Toronto's. Secondly, the geographic spread of the Montreal site was larger compared with Toronto. Finally, the cultural histories of the neighborhoods were quite unique. The neighborhood in Montreal had acquired a distinct identity of its own, built over generations and succeeding waves of new immigrants. In Toronto, the neighborhood boundaries were established by the City of Toronto as early as 2012. In informal conversations, residents often did not know the precise name of the neighborhood when asked. The City of Toronto came up with the name

and boundaries for the neighborhood after an outbreak of gun violence in 2012 that took the lives of two young bystanders. The neighborhood was created out of the merger of several low-income tracts in the area, which were then set apart from the more affluent residential areas on the outskirts. Once the new neighborhood was formed, it became part of the City's network of "Priority Neighborhoods" and eligible for grants under a program for urban revitalization.

Data Collection

Once the neighborhoods for the study were chosen, the next step was to find community organizations willing to accommodate a researcher. In each site, a partnership was formed with two different organizations: a youth-serving organization and a multi-purpose organization with services and activities for adults, children, and youth. Approval for the research was obtained from the directors of the four organizations and each one signed a consent form.

Through the five months of fieldwork, the data collection involved spending time in the agencies, usually for 2 or more hours at a time, helping with a variety of activities such as, team meetings, supervision of after-school programs, and the planning and coordination of events. My volunteering activities were more intensive at the youth organizations than the multi-purpose agencies. At the site in Toronto, the manager of adolescent programs asked if I would assist him and his team in developing an evaluation framework, which I happily agreed to do. In the Montreal site, I voluntarily organized two teams of students in the local high school to write articles for the student newspaper. The youth organization where I was volunteering operated an after-school program in the basement of the high school. It had also obtained funding from the City of Montreal to publish a bi-annual student newspaper. Together with my research assistant,

we formed two groups of students to work on two articles covering different subjects. The groups ended up being segregated by gender, because the students preferred to work with their friends. The all-female team worked on an article describing the contributions of Haitian professionals to community development in the neighborhood, which drew on interviews with key informants that the students organized together with the research assistant. The all-male team wrote an article revolving around the local vernacular of youth, in which words and expressions in Haitian creole, French, and other languages (i.e., Arabic, Spanish) are interspersed. In return for their participation in the student newspaper, the students received school credits.

As indicated, the sources of data for the study included observations and semi-structured interviews, in addition to many informal conversations. The semi-structured interviews were organized with four main groups in mind: black male youth, their parents, public service employees (including school personnel, public health workers, and police officers), and non-profit workers in each site. Each one of the interviews was tape-recorded, once the respondent had granted his or her consent. Otherwise, the data from observations and conversations were recorded in a notebook.

The original goal was to hold up to two interviews with 30 black male youth across the two sites. The sample ended up being comprised of 31 young males, including 13 in Montreal and 18 in Toronto. The number of respondents was unexpectedly higher in Toronto, because two mothers came forward to ask if their sons could participate in the study because they believed it would be a positive experience for them. A total of 6 interviews with the mother and/or father of the young males were completed in Montreal, and 10 in Toronto. While it would have been preferable to interview each parent, reaching them by phone and arranging interviews proved to

be difficult in several cases. Interviews with young males were easier to schedule, because a majority of them would visit or attend after-school programs in the neighborhood.

In order to participate in an interview, each adolescent had to obtain parental consent, unless he was 18 years and older, in which the youth could independently consent to an interview. Once a parent had granted his or her consent, a youth was asked to give his assent. To protect the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, only pseudonyms were kept, instead of real names. In addition, recordings of the interviews were transferred to a password-protected computer within 24 hours of the appointment. Once the recording had been saved, the original recording on the tape recorder was deleted. To thank the youth and parents for their participation in the study, young males received compensation of \$20 and parents were given \$25. The compensation was handed at the end of the interview and enclosed in a thank you card.

A special interview protocol was developed for the interviews with youth and their parents. Similar themes were covered in the two sets of interviews. Parents and youth were asked about their personal experiences with local organizations along with their views on the services and the needs and challenges of black youth. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and two hours. Interviews with parents tended to be the longest, between one hour to three hours.

In the Montreal site, all 13 of the youth were of Haitian origin; an even number were born in Quebec and Haiti. Two had moved to Montreal after the devastating earthquake of 2010. One of the young men was bi-racial, with one black and one white parent. A sincere effort was made to recruit and interview African-born youth, but to no avail. Two young African-born males agreed at first to participate in an interview, but their parents declined to give their consent. In Toronto site, the young people recruited for interviews had varied national and cultural backgrounds, and included young black males who were native-born, African, and Caribbean.

In both sites, the youth participants were recruited mainly through contacts with community organizations and schools. Recruiting young males who did not participate in community organizations was considerably more challenging. In Montreal, a vice-principal from a local high school agreed to lend a hand and to put the researcher in contact with several classes of students. In the Toronto site, a black male youth worker who had grown up in the neighborhood was hired to assist with recruitment. He and I did the rounds of places where young people hang out after school, such as convenience stores, the local McDonald's, and parks. Surprisingly, the strategy yielded no interviews. Even after a youth had expressed an interest in participating in the study in these impromptu meetings, it was difficult to re-establish contact with them or with their parents. A visit to a local church on a Sunday provided an opportunity to recruit a black father and his son and both participated in an on-one-one interview.

For Phase 1, semi-structured interviews were also organized with a representative sample of local professionals and organizations. The purpose was to learn about the organizations themselves, as well as gain insights into the neighborhood as a whole such as, its history of community development, the strong and weak points about service provision, and the conditions for, and participation of, black youth and families. No compensation was offered to organizational employees, although each respondent was asked to sign a consent form. Each interview was tape-recorded, on condition the respondent granted his or her consent. In Toronto, a total of 10 interviews were held with local institutions and organizations. This included: the director and a manager at the largest youth organization, the director and youth programs officer at the local "hub," staff at the municipal recreation center, a basketball coach, a pastor, and a member of the coalition that founded the "hub" in the early 1990s. In the Montreal site, a total of 15 interviews were held with a broader set of actors, including staff in two of the oldest Haitian

community organizations, a basketball coach who doubled as a youth worker, a school monitor (a black male who was close with youth and involved in raising funds for youth programs), a school coach, teacher, former school principal, a community development officer in the local health center, the commander of the local police station, two youth workers from different organizations, two program officers from agencies serving mothers, and a couple of representatives of a local committee working on racial profiling in policing.

Phase 2: Policy Analysis

Phase 2 of the study began in December 2015, once a preliminary set of research questions had been written and a handful of interviews were scheduled. Two primary methods of data collection were used: a) interviews with actors who had participated directly or indirectly in the policy process in each province between 2004 and 2006, and; b) archival research. The following research questions were formulated for Phase 2:

- 1) Which individual actors, institutions, and organizations participated in the policy process and how? What precise roles did they play? What were their respective goals, motives, and perspectives?
- 2) How did debates about the urban violence and the policy solutions unfold in the media and in the political arena?
- 3) What conceptual frames and policy repertoires were articulated and by whom (e.g., youth gangs, neighborhood revitalization)? Where did these ideas originate?

- 4) What barriers and opportunities did policy-makers confront in writing the policy and having it approved?

A total of 20 open-ended interviews were completed with policy-makers, heads of government departments, politicians, and community organizations across the two provinces. This included 11 respondents in Ontario and 9 in Quebec. Each interview was organized to cover a pre-determined set of questions, yet the process was kept flexible in order to allow respondents to lead and open spontaneous lines of questioning. The interviews were held in either French or English, transcribed, and then analyzed line-by-line. The analysis was geared to answering the four questions highlighted above.

The sampling of respondents for Phase 2 proceeded in several stages. First, a list was drawn up of the government officials who had been most directly responsible for writing the policy, namely the policy's authors. This information was gathered in meetings with officials in each province. Once these respondents were contacted and interviewed, snowball sampling was used to identify and locate other individuals who had helped conceive, write, or advocate for the policy. The first group of "policy authors" in each province, whom we might call the "nucleus" of the policy design team, provided the names of up to two government colleagues with whom they had written the policy in 2005. Once the members of the nucleus were interviewed, a second list of respondents was drawn up of individuals and groups who had played indirect roles in the policy process, either as members of committees, meetings, grassroots coalitions, and NGOs.

The aim of the snowball sampling was to reach and interview every person who had had a front row seat in the policy process (i.e., policy authors, policy entrepreneurs) and then move outwards to find other individuals and groups who had not been as closely involved but who

could still speak knowledgeably about the policy's origins. Among respondents in the latter group were non-profit organizations in Toronto and Montreal who had taken part in the closed-door deliberations on the policy, lobbied for its passage, or were involved in the policy's implementation. As much as possible, an effort was also made to find and interview individuals of varying backgrounds who might have contrasting opinions on the policy process.

In Quebec, interviews were completed with two officials from the Ministry of Public Security, including one who had recently retired; both had been part of the “nucleus” of the policy writing team in 2005. In addition, two government officials who came on board a few years later and helped write and lead Phase 2 of the *Street Gang Intervention* (2010-2014) were interviewed separately. An attempt was made to reach and interview two other career bureaucrats from the Ministry of Public Security who had been identified as part of nucleus and both refused to be interviewed. In general, contacting officials in the Ministry of Public Security, getting approvals for interviews and securing access to documentation was a significant challenge. People either took long to reply to email and voice mail messages or never answered. For an entire year, communication was sent to the Ministry of Public Security with a request for the names or titles of individuals in the social service departments of the provincial government who had participated in a special inter-ministerial committee for the policy. The head of the appropriate department promised to reply and never did, even after repeated messages were sent. The names of these committee members were finally obtained via another contact, but it was too late for the present study. Fortunately, a former colleague working for a separate government agency and based in Montreal knew some of the key individuals who had worked on the *Street Gang Intervention* and wrote an introductory email on my behalf. This greatly eased the process

of not only establishing a personal contact with respondents, but also securing approval for interviews.

The failure to interview representatives of social service ministries who sat on the inter-ministerial committee represents one unexpected limitation of the study. It is conceivable that these interviews would have elicited points of view and pieces of information overlooked in the interviews with officials from the Ministry of Public Security. However, the difficulty in finding and locating these actors can be explained, in part, by their apparently tepid interest in the policy process, as Chapter Four will explain. Despite these limitations, interviews were held with representatives of the social service agencies most active in the *Street Gang Intervention*, namely the child welfare department and the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity, Inclusion*. Finally, three additional interviews were carried out with an NGO in Montreal that had long been collaborating with the Ministry of Public Security on the *Street Gang Intervention*, a former employee of the Montreal police department who had been in charge of the department's office for community relations and diversity in the 1990s, and a retired detective from the same department who had lobbied for the policy and took part in the high-level meetings during the early and mid-2000s.

In Ontario, a total of three interviews were carried out with government officials who had formed part of the nucleus of the policy design team. This included a head of department, a deputy minister, and a former politician. In addition, three separate interviews were completed with the leaders and authors of a governmental commission on violence, which resulted in the publication in 2008 of the highly-lauded "Roots of Violence Report." Among these interviews was one current and one former black politician associated with the province's Liberal party. Additional interviews were carried out with representatives of two well-established black community organizations in Toronto and four black professionals and community activists who

had been part of the grassroots coalition formed in the 2000s to put pressure on the government to act on the urban violence and release funds for social and community programs.

The purpose of the archival research was to locate and analyze documentation written about the urban violence of 2005 and the policy, so as to gain a fuller appreciation of the actors, debates, and political circumstances of the period and their impact on the policy design. The archival material included: press releases, newspaper articles, program evaluations, and proceedings of conferences and legislative debates. In 2016, a formal request was submitted to the Ministry of Public Security for copies of items such as meeting minutes, lists of committee members, presentations to Cabinet, and program evaluations. In an email, an official from the Ministry replied that the documents remained confidential and could not be released.

Altogether, the two phases of the research were carried out over a period of about 15 months, starting in September 2014 and ending in July 2016. The interviews for Phase 2 were carried out between December 2015 and July 2016. Due to the unexpected shift in the study's theoretical foci and the large quantity of data gathered, the present dissertation focuses its attention on summarizing and interpreting the results from Phase 2 and presents only a brief sketch of the findings obtained from the two neighborhood sites. Future publications will discuss the results from Phase 1 in greater depth. The next chapter moves directly into the data analysis and discusses the policy process in Ontario as it unfolded between 2005 and 2006.

Chapter 3 : Ontario's "Youth Opportunities Strategy"

The present chapter discusses the agenda-setting and policy-making process that led to the creation of the *Youth Opportunities Strategy*, a policy introduced by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) of Ontario in February 2006. Though the chapter places the attention on the youth strategy, it was not the only action the Ontario government undertook in response to the violence of 2005. The youth strategy was, however, the broadest of the initiatives and the only one designed to assist young people across the province. Apart from the youth policy, the Ontario government created the *Youth Challenge Fund* in the winter of 2006, a multi-million-dollar fund for new or fledgling non-profit organizations in the city of Toronto, specifically those desiring to create youth-led and youth-focused programs. The United Way of Toronto was given the responsibility of managing the YCF in 2006 and raising the matching funds of \$15 million dollars, which brought the total to \$45 million for five years. In response to requests from Toronto's black faith leaders in 2006, the Prime Minister made an additional \$3 million dollars available to the *Greater Toronto Area Faith Alliance*. In 2006, the group was led by a black Pentecostal minister in Toronto who had gained a rather controversial reputation for his controversial remarks about the deficiencies of black families in causing the violence.

Today, the *Youth Opportunities Strategies* has been folded into a general *Youth Action Plan* for the province, which brings under one umbrella the activities of the different government agencies responsible for families and children, including the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Since 2006, the *Youth Challenge Fund* has been closed and replaced with a province-wide fund called the *Youth Opportunities Fund*. At the time of the study in 2015, two non-profit organizations in the neighborhood site in Toronto had recently been awarded five-year grants of

several million dollars in the neighborhood from the *Youth Opportunities Fund*. The grants from the YOF are awarded on a competitive basis and allocated to community organizations across Ontario that offer services to disadvantaged families, children, and youth.

The purpose of the present chapter is to answer the following two questions: 1) why was the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* created in 2006?; 2) how and why did the government of Ontario opt for a solution to the violence that revolved around youth development, jobs, and community programs? In examining these questions, the chapter takes a step back in history to study the events that arose in Toronto in 2005 and 2006, the political climate of the period, the groups, organizations, and actors that played pivotal roles in the policy change, and the ideas that germinated and circulated at the time on the causes and solutions the violence.

As the chapter will show, episodes of gun violence in low-income neighborhoods of Toronto played an outsized role in dramatizing the sense of crisis and precipitating changes in policy at the municipal, provincial, and federal level. The City of Toronto was the first to act in 2004 and again in 2005, with the establishment of the *Community Safety Plan* (CSP), followed by the *Strong Neighborhoods Strategy* (SNS). In 2005, the Toronto Police department introduced the *Toronto Anti-Violence Strategy*, which would come under heavy criticism for increasing police practices of racial profiling and executing aggressive gang raids in low-income neighborhoods that swept many innocent and unsuspecting residents into the snare of the criminal justice system (Siciliano 2010). The provincial government came onto the scene a year later and embarked on two separate initiatives: first, it funneled resources into law enforcement in Toronto and a “guns and gangs” Task Force; secondly, it launched the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) in February 2006.

The pages that follow begin with an analysis of the causal factors that drove the Ontario government to introduce the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* in 2006. The second section explains why “youth development” became the central plank of Ontario’s solution to the violence.

Causes of the Policy Change

No other issue seems to have done more to spark sudden changes to urban policy in Ontario than gun violence in Toronto. Unlike other crimes, gun violence tends to occur more frequently in public spaces where the safety of bystanders is at risk. It has also tended to garner a disproportionate amount of intensive and often sensationalist media attention. Prior to 2006, many in the voluntary sector and philanthropic community in Toronto had been warning government authorities about the increasing and debilitating toll of income inequality and concentrated poverty in the city. Yet, it took more catastrophic events, namely incidents of deadly gun violence, for policy-makers to take note. Between 2003 and 2006, a flurry of activity took place at the municipal, provincial, and federal level, and nearly always in response to outbursts of street violence in Toronto. While violence in general in Toronto has not increased, the percentage of homicides committed with a gun has been rising since the mid-1990s. It has also been generally assumed that black males constitute the majority of victims and perpetrators of gun homicides, yet, no accurate data have yet become available to support such a claim. In one study, it was found that blacks represented 23% of the 951 victims of homicide in Toronto between 1988 and 2003 (Thompson, 2013). Such a figure certainly exceeds the proportional representation of blacks in Toronto, who represent about 7-8% of the city’s population, yet it is far from being a majority. In Thompson (2013), findings further show that most black victims of

homicide during 1988 and 2003 was male (83%), and close to half (or 47%) was under 34 years of age.

As indicated, the City of Toronto was the first to act on the violence and enact new policies, starting in 2004 with a *Community Safety Plan*, followed a *Strong Neighborhood Strategy* in 2005. The provincial government came onto the scene nearly two years later, after a gun fight in a busy downtown shopping center of Toronto on Boxing Day in 2005 that took the life of a young white female and injured six other individuals, all of whom were innocent bystanders. The suspects caught up in the gun fight included five black males and two white males; however, only the black males were accused of the crime and later handed jail sentences (Arvast 2016). In the aftermath of the Boxing Day tragedy, the Liberal Premier of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty, authorized government agencies to develop a program of action focusing on issues of youth employment and social provision. Before moving on to describe the turning point in December 2005, it is worth taking a brief detour to analyze the actions the City of Toronto took on its own prior to 2006. As will be explained later in the chapter, the stances of the Toronto Mayor and City administration played some role in shaping the discourse that would emerge about the need for anti-poverty solutions to the violence.

In 2003, the City of Toronto held an election and a social democratic candidate, David Miller, won the Mayor's seat. Within his first few months in office, several gun shootings erupted in Toronto and the Mayor found himself facing fierce criticism from conservative City Councilors and the mainstream press who argued he was not doing enough to control the violence. One article in the *Toronto Star* boldly said, "Wanted: A Mayor to Fight Crime" (James 2004). David Miller was a self-professed social democrat and the only one of three candidates running for Mayor in 2003 who had not campaigned on a promise to fight crime. For months,

Mayor Miller continuously resisted the pressure to embrace a hard line on the violence. When the police chief of Toronto came forward with a request for funding to hire more police officers in 2004, Mayor Miller turned him down. In a published interview, Miller commented on his preference for tackling the violence through prevention rather than law enforcement, he explained: *“The police can deal with guns...but jobs are not something the police can produce. One of the important components of our Community Safety Plan, one of the pillars, is the neighborhood phase, and the second pillar is that it focuses on the real needs of young people, and an important part of that is employment”* (International Observer 2005). When Mayor Miller announced the new *Community Safety Plan* in March 2004, he explained that its purpose was to “balance enforcement with prevention” (City of Toronto 2004). He maintained that the policy would complement the work of police officers by addressing the root causes of crime through prevention initiatives for “at-risk” youth. In his address to City Council in 2004, the Mayor articulated:

“Even though overall crime has actually decreased in many areas, we cannot ignore the tragic loss of life and serious injury that has resulted from the increased prevalence of guns in our city. The causes of crime are a complex mix of social and economic factors. Thus, solutions must also be multifaceted. To be successful, the City’s approach to improving community safety must balance enforcement with prevention. The central role of the Toronto Police Service in enforcing the law must be complemented by an effective blend of programs and services—particularly for youth who live in at-risk neighborhoods” (City of Toronto 2004).

Early in his tenure, Mayor Miller's opinions on crime and public safety were characteristically left-of-centre. He would later be accused of capitulating to the right-wing when he joined the call for heightened security and policing (Siciliano 2010). In the words of one City administrator who was interviewed in Horak (2010), Mayor Miller launched the *Community Safety Plan* in part to quiet his critics who said he was too "soft on crime," all the while channeling the funds into social and community programs. The City Council approved the Plan in March 2004 with a budget of \$28 million for four neighborhoods of the city most affected by the urban unrest. Due to the City's own cash-strapped budget, the *Community Safety Plan* would depend on significant contributions from outside partners, including business, school boards, colleges, non-profit organizations, the United Way of Toronto, and provincial ministries. A fair amount of the City's own contribution to the Plan would appear to have been funds re-allocated from existing budgets. The policy was written with nine inter-related strategies in mind. This included: 1) the creation of a Mayor's Advisory Panel on Community Safety led by the then Attorney General, Roy McMurtry, and composed of representatives from youth groups, labor, education, academia, and community organizations; 2) opening of a permanent office for a "Community Safety Secretariat," 3) financial and technical assistance for neighborhood residents to work together to devise "neighborhood action plans" aimed at enhancing prevention and community development; 4) money for community-based youth programs; 5) discussions with government about amending gun legislation (e.g., a ban on handguns); 6) implementation of a federally-funded pilot initiative on "gun use and gang involvement"; 7) partnerships with business to create jobs for youth; 8) strengthening the City's "Community Crisis Response" teams, and; 9) working with City Councilors to improve community safety programs in their wards.

The external contributions to the *Community Safety Plan* included an annual budget of \$20 million from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to keep schools open for recreational activities beyond regular school hours. In addition, various colleges, unions, the police, and local non-profit organizations arranged short-term internships and jobs for young people from the four selected neighborhoods (City of Toronto 2004). The United Way donated \$250,000 to finance the activities of its member agencies who were already active in the neighborhoods. The largest financial contribution came from four provincial ministries who together allocated \$500,000 to support a summer program, called “Jobs For Youth”. The four ministries included: the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation. Another \$212,000 was diverted from the provincial *Ontario Works Incentive Fund* to fund a “Life Skills in the Community” program run by a community agency in one of the four neighborhoods. Finally, the federal government contributed close to \$5 million through the *National Crime Prevention Centre* (NCPC) to pay for a three-year pilot initiative focusing on “gang exit” and wrap-around services for young people (City of Toronto 2008).

The ideas that went into the CSP were not only those of a social democratic Mayor, but also of a City administration in downtown Toronto that had a record of taking progressive and Liberal stances on issues ranging from housing, urban development, and the environment (Mahon and MacDonald 2009). The city’s *Social Development Strategy*, for example, written and approved in 2001, was conceived by a Steering Committee that included the well-known left-wing politicians Olivia Chow and the late Jack Layton, both prominent members of the National Democratic Party (City of Toronto 2001). In addition to laying out a set of core operating principles for the City’s municipal services, the strategy articulated three core priorities

that would continue to be part of policy discussions on urban poverty as time went on; that is, strengthening community capacity, investing in comprehensive social infrastructure, and expanding civic leadership and participation (Bradford 2005; City of Toronto 2001).

In the summer of 2005, a new outbreak of gun violence occurred in Toronto and grabbed local and national attention. By the end of the year, 80 men and women had lost their lives, including 52 with a firearm, the highest percentage ever of gun homicides (Sheptycki 2009). The summer was dubbed the “Summer of the Gun,” because of the record number of shootings. According to one study, the spike in gun violence that summer was the tragic outcome of a gang raid conducted by the police in a low-income neighborhood in 2004 (Siciliano 2010). Siciliano (2010) reports that among police officers and local public officials in Toronto, the violence erupted after the leaders of a local drug network were arrested and the vacuum left behind prompted younger males to compete with each other, often violently, for a share of the market.

Months before the summer of 2005, Mayor Miller had launched a *Task Force on Strong Neighborhoods*, in collaboration with the United Way of Toronto. The Task Force was set up after the United Way released a research report on poverty in Toronto, called “Poverty by Postal Code,” which highlighted the sharp and widening gap in income between the city’s affluent downtown core and the outer suburbs, where poverty rates are high. In the weeks after the shootings of the summer, Toronto’s City Council approved the recommendations of the Task Force. The legislation would consist of a *Strong Neighborhoods Strategy* (SNS) aimed at building-up and revitalizing the organizational infrastructure of 13 neighborhoods of Toronto with the highest poverty rates. The City’s financial contributions to the plan remained relatively modest. From its reserves, it allocated a budget of \$13 million for bricks and mortar (i.e., construction and renovation of facilities). Through a *Partnership Opportunities Legacy Fund*, the

private contributed an additional \$37 million between 2006 and 2009 (Horak 2010). The largest donation came from the United Way of Toronto, which allocated \$209 million across a seven-year period (2005 to 2012) (United Way 2012). In response to the crisis of the summer, Mayor Miller also shifted his position on policing and agreed to hire 150 new police officers (Police Accountability Bulletin 2005). Of the estimated budget \$12 million dollars for these new officers, the city would pay 60%, while the province would pitch in the remaining 40%.

Up to the winter of 2006, the City of Toronto had acted mostly on its own in response to the urban violence. Mayor Miller was quoted several times in the press calling on the federal and provincial governments to do more and to invest in social and community programs. One of the recommendations laid out in the report of the *Task Force on Strong Neighborhoods* was for a tri-partite agreement between the city, province, and federal government to make much-needed resources available to the City of Toronto. Discussions for such a tri-partite agreement were underway in 2005, yet came to a complete halt once the Conservative party of Stephen Harper won the federal elections and immediately abolished plans for national urban policy.

In October 2005, a year before the federal elections and coinciding with the urban uprisings in the Paris suburbs, the Liberal government of Paul Martin announced it was making a multi-million-dollar budget available for the provinces to fight against youth gangs and the spread of illegal guns in urban areas. In interviews with government informants, it was said that the federal funds went directly into law enforcement and had no bearing on the youth policy.

When the Boxing Day shooting occurred in December in downtown Toronto, the political and public clamor for government action on the violence boiled over. The episode was said to have sparked an outcry like nothing the city of Toronto had ever seen before. For the first time, a young white female, Jane Creba, became a victim of the gun violence and the safety of

the larger public was now seen under threat. Stories about the shooting were on the top of the news for days and months. In recalling the events of that winter, a senior policy-maker in the MCYS described the public reaction in the following way: *“The city went crazy. And it was one of these things...where for me I have to say...I was a bit taken aback, quite frankly. That we had 78 young men die in this city, and then on Christmas day, when a young white girl got killed, the city went crazy. All of sudden we had to do something. That, in itself, was a reflection of the city. There was no question in my mind that race was front and center. The events of a young white girl, getting caught up in gang warfare, that actually precipitated all the political interest and political will to get in there and create action.”* In another interview with an official from the MCYS, one of the authors of the youth policy corroborated the claim that the Boxing Day was a turning point. Though officials in the Ministry had been persuaded by the “Summer of the Gun” to begin looking for solutions to the urban violence, the sense of urgency reached a peak after the Boxing Day shooting; the respondent explained, *“what really got the political attention and led to the investment in a very immediate way was definitely the Jane Creba piece.”*

The consensus among respondents interviewed in government and community organizations in Toronto was that Jane Creba’s death completely altered the political significance of the gun violence, because she was a young white female and the shooting happened in the city’s business district and nerve center. In interviews, respondents deplored the racially disparate treatment that was accorded to Jane Creba versus the youth of color who had died from gun violence in the months and years before. A black community worker and now government administrator recalled, *“it is widely acknowledged at the community level, part of the tipping point was the shooting of Jane Creba...Because many of the incidents happened in social housing, the value of their lives was not that prominent as Jane Creba.”* In an editorial appearing

in the *Toronto Globe and Mail* in 2006, a spokesperson for the *Coalition of African-Canadian Community Organizations* (CACCO) asked, “why is it that we must wait for the crime and the violence to extend beyond the borders of the African-Canadian community to get some kind of a response?” (Gray 2006). The Mayor of Toronto and federal prime minister both refuted claims that the political reaction to the Boxing Day shooting had been racially biased (Doolittle 2006).

While racially stereotypical and inflammatory media images of black males involved in violence and crime were not new, the coverage of the Boxing Day shooting grew louder and harsher in tone (Buffam 2009; Saberi 2017; Sheptycki 2009). Words such as “brutal” and “senseless” were used to describe the behavior of the young black men. In one especially extreme example, a columnist in the *Toronto Star* describes the suspects of the shooting as “urban savages” who showed a “callous disregard for life” (DiManno, quoted in Saberi 2017). Throughout, the media never (or rarely) showed the faces of the white male suspects, only the black male suspects. The following commentary in the *Toronto Star* provides an illustration of the sense-making that happened around the Boxing Day shooting and how it came to be seen as an event that was different from all the other episodes of gun violence.

“Across this city, since Jane Creba died on Monday, people are asking the same questions. What will it take for enough to be enough? Are we there yet? The answer, Toronto, is that the time is now. There is a powerful sense among the residents of our city that this week is different. Partly it's because, at 15, she could have been anybody's daughter, sister, friend. Partly, it's because she was mortally shot on Yonge St., in the heart of the city, simply because she happened to go shopping on Boxing Day.”

Scholars who have studied the media coverage of the Boxing Day tragedy describe a tense atmosphere in which the resounding call was for an intensified law-and-order response and more stringent punishments for gun offenses (Buffam 2009). Occasionally, voices from the left could still be heard affirming an alternative view, in which the stress was on the need for government to fix the structural roots of the violence and undo the neo-liberal cuts of the 1990s (Buffam 2009). Thus, while the clamor for law-and-order grew louder and more impatient after Boxing Day in 2005, it was not the only opinion circulating in the press. The bi-partisan discourse on the violence would come to characterize the provincial government's response in 2006, which consisted both of a heightened role for law enforcement and new financing for crime prevention and youth development.

In the days after Boxing Day, leaders at all three levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal) spoke out in favor of more restrictive and punitive laws for gun offenses. The incident went on to become part of the campaign platform of all three major national political parties. The three party leaders, even the traditionally left-leaning Jack Layton of the National Democratic Party (NDP), articulated the need for harsher penalties for youth who commit offenses with guns (Watt 2006). In a conference call on December 31st, the Premier of Ontario Dalton McGuinty, the federal Prime Minister Paul Martin, and Toronto Mayor David Miller agreed to introduce "reverse onus" bail conditions, which would require individuals accused of gun crimes and incarcerated to demonstrate why they should be released (Benzie and Byers 2006). The federal Conservatives wanted to go further by amending the Criminal Code to transfer young offenders to the adult criminal court, and impose mandatory minimum sentences on gun crimes (Benzie and Byers 2006). Mayor Miller, who had previously been criticized for

being too “soft” on crime, agreed to hire another 100 new police officers and assign 300 more to street patrols (Gray 2005). In keeping with his earlier position, Mayor Miller maintained that the provincial and federal government had to do more to alleviate poverty and reduce the violence by investing in social programs in high-poverty neighborhoods.

In reflecting on the impact of the Boxing Day shooting, a senior government administrator in the MCYS who worked on the youth policy indicated the Premier, Dalton McGuinty, was “*very seized in the new year of 2006 with wanting to deal this issue that happened at Christmas.*” He acknowledged, with some regret, that “*it wasn’t until a white girl seemed to get killed and got caught up in it. All of this political will came around. All the political will to make any kind of change. The Prime Minister asked us to develop what we eventually called the Youth Opportunities Strategy.*” Another member of the policy design team volunteered that the decision to accelerate the youth policy in late 2005 came directly from the Premier. In his words: “[The decision came] *definitely from above. Like our impression at the lower level was definitely between the Premier’s office, the Minister and the Minister’s office. Again, our senior leaders had the foresight to have us start thinking about youth and Positive Youth Development (PYD) ahead of that. But the actual, “go do this now,” kind of direction, that came from above.*” The official went on to explain that in the days after Boxing Day, “*we marshalled the research that we did, and we put together the Youth Opportunities Strategy.*”

In addition to launching the youth strategy, the Premier of Ontario authorized a new and even larger budget for law enforcement, and promised at the time to invest \$51 million dollars to bring in new police officers, prosecutors and judges, as well as boost the “Guns and Gangs Unit” and Toronto Anti-Violence Strategy (TAVIS). Though it remains to be confirmed, it is quite possible that a portion of the \$51 million budget came from the federal government’s transfer of

funds for police forces in October 2005. It has also been reported that the intensification of law enforcement and “gang raids” in low-income neighborhoods in Toronto since 2005 has made young black males even more vulnerable than before to racial profiling and police abuse (Cowen and Siciliano 2011). The next section lays out the structure of the youth strategy before going into a discussion of the factors that motivated provincial authorities to adopt a policy of “youth development.”

Outline of the Youth Opportunities Strategy

On February 14th 2006, the Minister of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Mary Ann Chambers, officially announced that the provincial government would invest \$28 million dollars to finance the first three years of the new youth strategy. The implementation would begin in the 13 *Priority Neighborhoods* of Toronto, which were already the focus of the municipality’s *Strong Neighborhood Strategy*. Starting in year two, the youth strategy would be expanded to other areas of the province (MCYS 2006). In a press release, Minister Chambers indicated the main purpose of the youth policy was to “expand programs that help youth succeed in life,” via efforts that bring jobs, internships, community services, and better educational opportunities into low-income neighborhoods (MCYS 2006). She added, “young people are telling us that they need more opportunities to help them overcome the significant challenges they face to achieve success.”

Ms. Chambers was a black Liberal politician and the youth policy’s most senior leader and advocate in 2006. When she unveiled the policy in February 2006, she had been Minister for Children and Youth Services for two years, after having served for two years as head of the

“Ministry of Training and Community Colleges.” Her appointment to the MCYS came not longer after the “Summer of the Gun” and she and her team immediately began thinking about ways the Ministry could respond to the violence. Minister Chambers’ sense of urgency about the problem only grew with time, especially after November 2005, when another young black male was fatally shot while attending the funeral of a friend who had died from gun violence. At that point in time, it was no longer a question in the mind of Minister Chambers or her staff whether the MCYS would act on the violence, but exactly how and to what extent.

When the Boxing Day shooting occurred, Prime Minister McGuinty asked Minister Chambers to produce a policy that he could announce to the public in the spring of 2006. The team responsible for drafting the policy wound up taking less than six months to prepare it and obtain Cabinet approval. According to a couple of respondents, Minister Chambers and her co-authors on the youth policy worked at frenetic pace immediately after Boxing Day to convene meetings with stakeholders, consult with other departments, iron out the contributions of different agencies, agree on budgets, select projects to support, and write a Cabinet submission. The policy was written fairly rapidly and with relatively few complications. The speed with which it was produced was likely a function of the time pressures, the preparation the staff at the Ministry had already made ahead of time before Boxing Day, and the political support the youth policy enjoyed at senior levels of the government and in the NGO community. Even though the order for the policy had come from above and there was a consensus among senior heads of government that action was urgently needed, Minister Chambers still had to invest time and energy into championing the idea of a youth strategy and convincing partners in other government agencies to make independent contributions, either in cash or in-kind. She also

personally convened a meeting with a representative group of black community organizations in Toronto to hear their perspectives on the violence and the strategies to solve it.

In the quote below, a senior administrator who oversaw the legislative process sums up the many and varied steps the authors of the Cabinet submission had to complete within a few short months: *“First, my folks started to do their policy work. They started looking at what other jurisdictions had done to grapple with this situation...So we send people out to talk to people, talk to the agencies, see what’s going on and then start to talk to young people...Obviously we have a strong focus on only making investments in what we know will work. So looking at the evidence of what works, talking to people, looking at communities, talking to providers. Trying to understand what some of the issues are, trying to understand where there are gaps and how or what is the right combination of things to put together in order to see a result. As we would be doing this work we would have put it into a Cabinet submission. We would have done inter-ministerial consultations, where we would have gone to see what other programs people were using. And through that we would have to brief our Deputy and our Minister, and get our Ministers on board. We would have had to gone and brief central agencies: Treasury Board and all those kinds of folks. We would have had to have a policy committee...”*

The \$28 million announced for the youth strategy in 2006 was devoted to six separate projects. These included: a) the recruitment of 39 full-time “Youth Outreach Workers” who would reach out to young people on the street, build relationships, and connect them to organizations and services; b) a “Summer Jobs for Youth program,” to provide jobs to 750 youth in Toronto in the first year, and raise the number to 1650 in the second year; c) a “Youth and Policing Initiative” for young people to participate in summer internships working for police stations; d) a school-based program of peer mediation and role modelling; e) a “Learn to Work”

program to enable students to gain employment experience while accumulating credits for their high school degree, and; f) a “youth opportunities” website to provide information on youth services and programs across the province (MCYS, 2006). Around the same time as the youth strategy, the MCYS announced it would be collaborating with other provincial Ministries to enhance academic and professional training opportunities for young people. This included a \$1 million grant for a *Youth Science and Technology Outreach Program* to encourage students to choose careers in science and technology, operated by the Ministry of Research and Innovation.

In the pages that follow, the discussion turns to the ideas that undergirded the youth policy. The aim is to explain how and why policy-makers in the MCYS determined that the concept “youth development” constituted the best solution to the urban violence. For the government of Ontario, the concept of “youth development” may have been new in 2006, yet it represents an idea that has long been in germination in the United States and the subject of numerous scientific studies and technical publications (Catalano et al. 2004; Sukarieh and Tannock 2015). For an institution like the MCYS, one dedicated to children and youth, the concept of youth development would seem to be a natural fit. However, its adoption in Ontario in 2006 must also be understood as a reflection of political and historical factors. The concept was viable in 2006 because of the arrival of a new Liberal government, which was open to a style of reform that fitted the Canadian model of social investment (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003). Its introduction in 2006 was consistent both with the perspectives of elected leaders and officers in the MCYS and with the policy preferences of black community organizations in Toronto.

Explanations for the Policy Design

The first factor to note in assessing the policy design is that the concept of “youth development” has, according to Sukarieh and Tannock (2015), spread around the world and become the subject of many national policies. As indicated above, Ontario was not acting out of the ordinary but rather taking a direction that had been gaining ground in international circles for some time, due in part to its endorsement by American foundations and international agencies like the World Bank. Sukarieh and Tannock (2015) assert that policies of “youth development” have been anything but ideologically-neutral, and represent a version of neo-liberal policy in which the accent is on youth entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and economic integration. In Canada, the popularity of youth development in Canada may be a function of international and local tendencies. In Canadian scholarship, it has been written that the trend in social policy reform in Canada has been to move away from family policy and towards targeted services for children and youth. The belief is that children and youth represent the “next generation” and that policies must work to prepare them for their future roles as contributing citizens, with policies such as early childhood education all the way to post-secondary training (Dubrowolsky and Saint-Martin 2005). Jenson and Saint-Martin (2003) describe this shift in Canadian social policy as the new “social investment state,” which is taking the place of the social rights of citizenship that were guaranteed under the Keynesian welfare state. The primary goal of a social investment state is to invest in human capital development and the economic integration of citizens. For Jenson and Saint-Martin (2003), the approach subscribes to a “Third Way” path of reform that lies between outright neo-liberalism and social democracy.

Given the political rise of social investment in Canada, it may not be surprising that an official from the MCYS described the advent of youth policy in 2006 as a near “inevitability.” He explained, *“there was a certain inevitability to taking this approach. We also had at the time a very active stakeholder environment. Again, a minister who saw the benefit of this. It was definitely a catalyst [the Boxing Day shooting] or incited the investment decision at that time, but because we had been asked to start thinking about some of that work ahead of it, was definitely something that was “in the making.”*” In other interviews, respondents spoke of the youth strategy as reflecting a political consensus that arose in 2005. A participant in a black community coalition remembers, *“So [the] consensus was built around, “Yeah, we need a youth strategy. It has to be provincial...and it has to address systemic issues.”* Another official from the MCYS spoke of how the idea for a youth strategy was supported by senior government heads, black Liberal politicians, and prominent black community organizations. He said, *“Our Minister [Minister Chambers] really, really, both at the Cabinet level and at the level of advocating with her colleagues, felt very, very strongly that there should be a preventative, youth development focused element of this, and I know in particular she had a very sympathetic partner in the Premier and the Premier’s office...At the time it’s important to note, and there were people closer to this who had a better recollection. The political folks were definitely the ones having the stakeholder conversations so it came from above but from outside as well, if that makes any sense. For example, there were some very active community organizations that were saying government needs to do something. People like Margaret Parsons at the African-Canadian Legal Clinic, Donna Harrow now with the African-Canadian Coalition of Community Organizations. People like Alvin Curling and Ken Jeffers, who were leaders in the community.”*

Black Political Participation

As elected politicians, organizational leaders, individual activists, and public servants, members of Toronto's black community played leading roles in advocating for a systemic and preventative approach to the urban violence. Though the black community in Toronto was not the only one touched by the gun violence in those years, the common perception among black community leaders and activists was that young black males were among the prime victims. Between 2001 and 2006, organizational leaders within the black community came together in coalitions and gradually formed a unified front on the issue, enough to produce a joint action plan that the *Coalition of African-Canadian Community Organizations* presented to the three levels of government during 2005. One of the remarkable features of the black political mobilization of the period was the sheer number of groups and individuals involved—the membership of the CACCO included 37 independent organizations in 2005—and the strategic positions that black professionals held as politicians and public servants, not infrequently in positions of seniority and influence. In the mainstream press coverage on the urban violence in the early 2000s, it is common to find articles and editorials in which black organizational leaders, activists, and coalition representatives are either being quoted by a journalist or speaking with their own voice about the causes and solutions to the urban violence.

In the months leading up to and after the critical events of 2005, the black Liberal caucus of the provincial party and black organizational leaders in Toronto worked independently and collectively to pressure the three levels of government into financing and expanding social provision and educational programs for black youth. As already indicated, Mary Ann Chambers was the leading champion for the youth policy in 2005 and 2006. Other black Liberal politicians,

such as Alvin Curling and Ken Jeffers, held their own private conversations with Prime Minister McGuinty to express the need for action on the violence. With the support of the Prime Minister, Alvin Curling would go on to lead a major government inquiry into the violence, in partnership with the Honorable Roy McMurtry, former attorney general and longstanding advocate for racial justice in Ontario. That inquiry would result in the publication of the well-known and widely circulated “Roots of Violence Report,” released in 2008. As early as 2001, a black-led coalition called “Building Hope Coalition” held a forum to which it invited Jean Augustine, a black female politician with the federal Liberal party and Minister of State for Multiculturalism during 2002 and 2004 (Palmer 2001). At the meeting, Ms. Augustine told the audience that several federal ministries were preparing to release a new budget to support programs for black youth. When the federal funds did come through a year later, an amount of \$8.5 million was awarded to 145 organizations situated across Ontario and not only black community organizations.

Between 2001 and 2006, black community leaders and activists held community forums, made regular appearances in the press, published editorials, and requested face-to-face meetings with provincial and federal Ministers in Toronto and Ottawa. In looking back on the activities of the black community in 2005, a black community worker in Toronto recalled, *“I think there was a mobilizing of some of the leaders in communities. Louis Marsh, Margaret Parsons, Dudley Laws, Alving Curling, Nneke Kafele, and there were many others...The key figures who would meet fairly regularly to strategize and then to plan, and then would reach out to politicians, request meetings with ministers at provincial and municipal level [in order] to advocate for additional resources or to urge the government to act.”* A former member of the black-led coalition remembers the role of the black Liberal caucus in this way: *“They [the black Liberal caucus] were pivotal in saying that we needed a strategy that would focus on youth*

unemployment as the broader goal and then, if we can address that, then we will solve a lot of the issues with crime. There was also a talk...[about] three pieces; youth unemployment, tackling anti-Black racism....And the talk was to develop strategies around the trades, skills trades, which include apprenticeship and peer apprenticeship programs.”

In their media pronouncements, black political actors consistently maintained the same general argument about the causes of the urban violence, by drawing attention to the deepening crisis of poverty and inequality in Toronto, the drastic cuts to social programs during the 1990s, and enduring racial discrimination. One of the major grievances articulated by the black community coalition in the early 2000s was the effect of the Conservative government’s cuts on the disappearance of many vital community programs for black youth. In one interview, a former coalition member who was still an active community leader in Toronto, described how black activists and leaders shifted the conversations on the violence onto to broader questions of poverty, racial discrimination, and government neglect. He explained, “*they [black coalition leaders] were looking at poverty, you know, structural poverty. They were looking at immigration policies that had kind of...from Federal level to Provincial level. It was focused on skills and what you bring to Canada. Some people were very critical that the immigration policy had turned a blind eye to family separation, you know, family needs, family issues. And so the conversation around crime, you know, was the central focus. People were bringing attention to other structural issues of marginalization, of alienation, of community neglect, you know? Of people not feeling that they have any kind of social support, educational assistance. So it implicated a lot of other systems.*” In a second interview, another longstanding black community organiser and now government professional expressed a similar view when he said, “*when people saw the gun violence as being an issue...for many of us [in the black community], we saw*

that as a symptom of larger systemic issues that were manifesting in that way. [It was] The culmination of the school-to-prison pipeline, unfair immigration, employment, criminal justice, housing problems. All of these problems created an ongoing sort of crisis that lead to summer of the gun, and continues to this day.”

In the policy debates around the violence, black political actors seem to have done more than any other group to direct the agenda-setting onto problems of racism and institutional discrimination. This was not a new development. Organizations such as the *Black Action Defense Committee* (BADC) and the *African-Canadian Legal Clinic* had been leading a vigorous grassroots campaign against racial profiling and policing for decades. A representative of the *Jamaican Canadian Association* described the BADC and its long-time leader, Dudley Laws, as having been one of the fiercest and most vocal critics of the government’s failure to deal with racial discrimination. He recounted, “*They [the Black Action Defense Committee] were making public statements, holding press conferences, challenging various government Ministers to not only talk, but to act in the best interest of the Black community. So, they were at the forefront.*” The analysis that black community organizations brought to bear on the urban violence was grounded not only in their own observations, but also built on the input of residents they had spoken to in community forums the CACCO carried out in the early 2000s. According to a respondent, one of the major comments s/he remembers hearing from concerned parents and community members in those forums was the need for programs to enhance young people’s educational and professional opportunities. One of the oft-repeated suggestion was for schools and community organizations to widen access to vocational training in high school.

Findings from the study show that black political actors and community organizations were not only instrumental in framing the policy agenda around urban violence; their technical

expertise on community programs was also decisive in the deliberations over the youth policy of 2006. Two sub-components of the youth policy—the youth employment program and the “Youth Outreach Workers”—were grounded in the expertise of black community organizations and workers based in Toronto. When the Ministry of Children and Youth Services was exploring ways to assist with youth employment, it turned to *Tropicana Community Services*, one of the oldest and most established black community organizations in Toronto. At the time, *Tropicana* was operating a youth employment program that had already proven to be effective and was seen by the Ministry as an exemplary model. The Ministry recruited *Tropicana* to be the primary coordinating agency for the summer jobs program in Toronto and to train non-profit organizations outside Toronto to implement the same model in their own locales, in cities such as Hamilton, London, and North Bay. In the following quote, a policy-maker in the MCYS describes how the decision to adopt *Tropicana*’s youth employment program transpired: “*it was really clear that summer employment at that time was highly popular in the literature and here we had this great local version of the program being delivered by an agency that was legitimate to the communities we were targeting.*” Under the youth strategy, the Ministry subsidizes the wages of young people and sub-contracts *Tropicana* to find and maintain contact with employers in Toronto. Minister Chambers described the methodology in this way: “*the government would subsidize the wages for the summer, so that the employer’s role was to provide the work experience. If they wanted to top off the salary they could do so. The agency [the community agency] would make the connections with employers and find positions for these youth. The agencies also had to deliver pre-employment training.*” In a joint interview, two professionals from *Tropicana* claimed that one of the ingredients of the youth employment program’s success is its holistic and integrated approach to addressing young people’s needs. They explained that

the most vulnerable youth who come for summer jobs often need more than just an income, but also assistance in meeting other basic needs and developing the right set of work-related skills. In the interview, it was mentioned that the young people who seek jobs with *Tropicana* may be homeless or come from families struggling to make ends meet. Thus, the agency frequently helps young participants satisfy their basic needs so that they can hold down a job, either by paying for meals, supplying bus tickets, arranging for housing, or offering moral and social support. According to Tropicana, the agency has arranged up to 1000 summer jobs for young people since 2005. On average, over 90% of the youth complete the program successfully. Employers have reported back to Tropicana to express their satisfaction with the program and have even been known to hire young people for permanent positions after the summer contracts ended.

The second component of the youth policy that was founded on the expertise of black community organizers is the *Youth Outreach Workers* (YOW) program. The idea for the YOW arose in a conversation that Minister Chambers had with a veteran black community organizer in Toronto who had expressed to her that the most effective way to connect young people to social services is to reach them where they spend their leisure time after school, in parks, fast food joints, shopping malls, etc. In the opinion of the community organizer, it was not a shortage of services that was the problem, but rather the capacity of organizations to build durable connections with adolescents and young adults. As Minister Chambers explained it, the concept of the YOW is of a community worker whose office is his or her “backpack”, who spends time strolling the streets and visiting public spaces to meet and form relationships with young people, provides referrals to services, and acts as a mentor and friend. Minister Chambers’ remembered the community organizer describing the aim of YOW in this way: “*Minister, teenagers are not children anymore. They don’t get dropped off by their parents at community centers. The Youth*

Outreach Workers find them where they are, whether it is a subway station, or basketball court, wherever.” Another observation from the community organizer that solidified the case for the YOW was the idea that the team of youth outreach workers would retain the flexibility to meet the various needs of young people, without having to be constrained by the rules and restrictions typical of most funding packages. In the 2005 meeting, Minister Chambers recalls the community organizer explaining to her the following: *“when we [community organizations] get money for programs we have to adhere to the terms of that agreement. We can’t necessarily do what we need to do for that young person. We have to deliver the services that we were funded for. A Youth Outreach Worker has the flexibility to do what is necessary.”*

The view expressed by the black community organizer to Minister Chambers in 2005, that community services for young people were in sufficient supply, seems contrary to the consensus that had formed around the need to fill urgent gaps in the social service infrastructure of low-income neighborhoods and undo the cutbacks of the Conservative government (Cowen and Parlette 2011). One wonders if the view of the community organizer and Minister Chamber was preferable to a Liberal administration that had vowed not to raise income taxes.

The influence of black community organizations and front-line workers on the policy process began with the agenda-setting, shifted to the policy design, and continued with the implementation. Once the YOW was set in motion, black community organizations worked to ensure that they would be among the agencies selected to coordinate the program in Toronto. The fear at the time was that black community organizations would be overlooked and that larger and more powerful mainstream organizations would be handed the contracts. The *Jamaican Canadian Association* (JCA), one of the oldest black immigrant organizations in Toronto, applied to be a “lead agency” for the YOWs in one section of the city. The JCA succeeded in

winning the contract, but not without encountering significant problems. Once the contract was awarded, the JCA faced relentless pressure from a program manager at the Ministry who continuously and for no apparent reason would ask the agency to submit financial and accountability records. In an interview, a senior organizer with the JCA suggested the Ministry employee may have been uncooperative because s/he had wanted another organization to win the contract or because s/he was harboring racial biases and did not have confidence in the organization's capacities. The organizer painfully recalled what it felt like for the JCA to work with the government officer at the time, claiming "[s/he] *was dedicated to try and destroy the JCA...eventually she was ordered out and into retirement quietly.*"

One of the other sub-components of the 2006 youth policy that most bore the personal imprint of Minister Chambers was the *Youth and Policing Initiative* (YPI), which she decided upon in a meeting with the Toronto Police Chief and the President of the Police Services Board. In November 2005, Minister Chambers participated in a meeting at which the Toronto police chief had invited members of Toronto's leading black organizations to discuss a recent fatal shooting. The meeting was apparently heated and tense and produced no tangible results. In light of the meeting, Minister Chambers invited the police chief to meet with her privately at the Ministry. When they met, the police chief presented a proposal in which he was requesting funding to finance 50 annual summer internships for young people to work in their local police stations. Minister Chambers was eager to find a way to mend the strained relations between black youth and the Toronto police and saw the police chief's proposal as the perfect fit; in response, she offered to double the number of internships and pay for up to 100 per year.

Since 2005, the YPI has been expanded and developed in other cities of the province. It has also become a permanent program, with a guaranteed annual budget. Minister Chambers and

others regard the program as an unqualified success. Apparently, over 1000 youth apply each year for the limited number of internships offered. Of those who participate, 40% regularly express an interest in becoming police officers. An increasing number of police officers have also taken an interest in being mentors. Minister Chambers claims her faith in the YPI was rooted partly in the fact that her own son has had a successful career in the Ontario police service. Many in the black community, on the other hand, were not as wholly supportive and some were even openly opposed to the idea of having black youth work with the police. To this day, the YPI remains somewhat controversial. One independent study on the YPI concluded that many of the young people who participate in the summer internships walk away with positive feelings about the police; however, the authors caution that while the program may succeed in changing the attitudes of young people, it does little to address the institutional practices that reinforce racial discrimination in policing (Chapman-Nyaho, James, Kwan-Lafond 2011).

The Politics and Policies of the City of Toronto

As indicated earlier, the City of Toronto began acting on the urban violence two years before the province, starting with the *Community Safety Plan* in 2004 and followed by the *Strong Neighborhoods Strategy* in 2005. Though the two policies have been criticized for being limited in scope and reach (Cowen and Parlette 2010; Horak 2010), they nevertheless reflected the general tone of opinion in policy circles in Toronto and appear to have had some impact in shaping the consensus in the mid-2000s around the need to fill gaps in the service delivery system of low-income neighborhoods. As a rule, the City of Toronto wields considerable influence over the policy discourse in Ontario (Mahon and MacDonald 2009). Traditionally,

central Toronto has been a hub of left-wing activism, contrary to the suburbs where voters are more likely to vote Conservative (Kipfer and Keil 2002). Before the city and suburbs were amalgamated in 1998, the downtown municipality (previously known as Metro Toronto) had acquired a reputation for taking progressive and Liberal stances on issues ranging from housing, urban development, to the environment (Boudreau, Keil, and Young 2006).

The administration of Toronto also seems willing to stake out independent positions on social policy even if these go against the wishes and priorities of provincial and federal agencies. Mayor Miller was openly critical of the Conservative Harris government, as were other social democratic city politicians such as, Jack Layton (Campion-Smith 2006). Though Jack Layton came under criticism for backtracking on his left-wing positions and speaking out in favor of tough-on-crime policies after Boxing Day, he was quoted in one newspaper as saying the violence in Toronto was “completely predictable because of government decisions to cut back on assistance to immigrants, educational opportunities for young people and affordable housing” (Campion-Smith 2006). Even as neo-liberal wave of the Harris regime swept the province in the 1990s, the municipality of Toronto continued to hold onto its Liberal and social democratic traditions (Boudreau et al. 2006). Examples of policies touted as evidence of the municipality’s progressive credentials include its child and youth policy, which defines child care as a basic right (Mahon and MacDonald 2010). In 2013, the City also ruled that undocumented immigrants had the right to public services without having to show an ID.

It is noteworthy that the youth policy arose at a time when a chorus of voices from the philanthropic sector, business community, and municipality was asserting the need to build the public infrastructure and organizational capacities of low-income suburbs, because this had been neglected for years. Between 2001 and 2005, a series of high-profile reports were published by

the City, the *United Way of Toronto*, and the *Toronto City Summit Alliance* (TCSA)—a coalition of political, civic, and economic elites—that all underscored the dire consequences of escalating poverty and residential segregation, the fiscal crisis brought on by the downloading of state responsibilities onto the municipality, and the urgent need for the provincial and federal governments to assist the City of Toronto in coping with its new administrative responsibilities and the changing demographics of the population. The TCSA 2002 report was entitled “Toronto’s Quiet Crisis: The Case for Social and Community Infrastructure Investment” (Clutterbuck and Howarth 2002). In the report, the authors speak of Toronto’s decaying infrastructure and warn of a crisis in the city’s system of child care, recreation, public health, libraries, environmental protection, immigration settlement, and community programs. The report goes on to suggest that the municipality pour resources into its physical and social infrastructure, stating “City Council and civic leaders must recognize social and community infrastructure as a priority that is as important to the quality of life in Toronto as physical infrastructure” (Clutterbuck and Howarth 2002: 15).

In each one of the above reports, the central recommendation for solving Toronto’s fiscal crisis and worsening socio-economic divides was to get the provincial and federal government to agree to a tri-partite agreement with the City of Toronto, in which they make additional funds available to off-set the municipality’s deficit. In its well-publicized report called “Poverty by Postal Code,” the United Way stated, “governments at all levels must make a commitment to reverse the spiral of growing neighborhood distress and disadvantage by delivering improved economic prospects and jobs, safer neighborhoods, decent and affordable housing, accessible community programs and services, and by fostering a renewed involvement and commitment in community among residents” (United Way 2004). When the *Task Force on Strong*

Neighborhoods released its report in June 2005, it repeated the call for a tri-partite agreement, insisting that it was urgent to support revitalization efforts in the city's *Priority Neighborhoods*. Under the federal Liberal government in 2005, discussions for a tri-partite agreement got underway, but they were ended abruptly in 2006 when the Conservative government of Stephen Harper won the election.

The 2003 Election of the Liberal Party

The youth policy arose under the Liberal government of Dalton McGuinty, which replaced the Conservative party after winning the 2003 elections. It is unlikely the policy would have been approved under the previous Conservative administration. When the Conservative party was in power, tensions between the government and members of the black community had reached a breaking point. In one instance, the Premier Mike Harris found himself in a heated public confrontation with black activists in Toronto when he attended an event to promote the "Crime Stoppers" program. When the activists told the Premier that he ought to be working on tackling poverty, rather than crime, he replied, "we will not foster programs that create dependency" and refused to say anything further on camera (Boyle 2001). Given that racial minorities and immigrants in Ontario tend to vote overwhelmingly for the Liberal party, the new McGuinty administration may have felt under some pressure to listen to and respond to the concerns of the black community. One black activist suggested in an interview that the Liberal government could ill afford to ignore the concerns of the black community in 2005. He explained that the gun violence had become a "wedge" issue because "*it was a Liberal government and*

Liberal governments in Ontario have a greater scrutiny around their response to racial minorities.”

The previous Harris administration had ended its time in power with low approval ratings and widespread unease among voters, unions, and public sector workers. There were few areas of policy that the Harris administration had not tried to cut or privatize. Among other things, the government introduced a 27% reduction in welfare payments, imposed “workfare” and a freeze on the minimum wage, undid labor standards, cut spending in public education, cancelled funds for public housing, supported a controversial *Safe Streets Act* and *Safe Schools Act*, relaxed environmental regulations, and repealed corporate taxes. By 2000, the number of public sector workers had fallen from 90,000 in 1990 to 60,000. The wage gap had also steadily widened over the period (Evans and Smith 2015). Shortly before the 2003 election, the Conservative administration faced its worst crisis when several residents of a town in Ontario died after drinking contaminated water, and the fault was laid on the repeal of environmental regulations.

When the Liberal party took over in 2003, it came in on a promise to safeguard and rejuvenate public services. The party also vowed to rebuild public services and without raising taxes. Within the first few years, the new administration engaged in a flurry of activity. Several new ministries were opened, including the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), which brought together a handful of independent agencies and departments (youth justice, child welfare, child care, early childhood learning and mental health). Other new Ministries were set up to oversee science and technology, business and entrepreneurship, and public infrastructure. One of the largest areas of public sector growth would occur in post-secondary education, where the budget was nearly doubled in four years (Evans and Smith 2015). In other words, the post-2003 period under the new government was one of accelerated reform, experimentation, and

innovation. When the MCYS was formed, therefore, it had room to innovate and proceeded to introduce a number of reforms. An official from the Ministry recalls, *“because of newness of the Ministry and mandate, there was a lot existential probing, there were a number of discussions about who we were what our value was.”* Government records show that during 2006 and 2007, the MCYS would not only launch the youth strategy, but also introduce several other new initiatives. This included: new funding for children with autism, a new accreditation and licensing system for child care workers, the first-ever child benefit, expanded services for children’s mental health, and new action plans for Aboriginal children and for children with special needs.

The heightened period of reform begun by the Liberal government in 2002 suggests it may have been eager to distinguish itself from the previous administration and chart a new course, one that struck a compromise between neo-liberalism and social democracy (or the Liberal welfare state). Thus, the political climate under the Liberal administration in 2005 was ostensibly more favorable to the inception of the youth policy. In the following quote, an official from the MCYS claims the political climate of 2005 left little doubt that the government would undertake some kind of response to the urban violence and that it would take the form of “youth development”: *“There wasn’t...I have to tell you...At the level of questioning, should there be a youth development, prevention focused element to this, there was very little debate. Even coming down to us [from the Premier], to ask us to do the work. That was explicit. My role really wasn’t in that instance...wasn’t sort of to make the case at the level...it was really to begin to formulate a framework for how we might do that. The political environment at the time I think was significant. So, it was fairly recent into the Liberal government mandate, and prior to that there was a Conservative government that had pursued an austerity agenda and there was a sense that*

they had reduced the programming and supports that would have kept kids out quote unquote, “out of trouble.””

Canada’s Social Investment Paradigm

A final word about the design of the 2005 youth policy was its grounding in the technical and academic literature on “Positive Youth Development” (PYD). According to respondents, the concept was adopted because it resonated perfectly with the government’s objective of creating programs for young people that would be preventive as well as non-stigmatizing. At the heart of the concept of PYD is the notion that young people grow and learn best in environments that positively reinforce their identities, skills, and talents, rather than try to fix or change “problem behaviors.” In announcing the youth strategy in 2006, Minister Chambers indicated: *“research studies confirm that young people are more likely to make positive choices if they are given the right supports and opportunities in their own communities early and when they need them. The Ontario government’s Youth Opportunities Strategy will help build stronger communities by expanding community programs that help troubled youth choose a brighter future for themselves.”* Another official claimed that while Minister Chambers may not have had the precise terminology of PYD, she did express to her staff a *“philosophical orientation that we needed to build these kids up rather than take a remedial or punishment approach.”* The same official went on to say: *“Our sense at the time, on youth violence, was that our role was to take the approach of prevention and thinking of lifelong outcomes. That led us to Positive Youth Development, and to programmatic research in jurisdictions. We were interested in the crime prevention approach, rather than the justice and police responses.”*

In addition to the literature on Positive Youth Development, policy-makers at the Ministry of Children and Youth Services reported that they borrowed ideas from the scientific literature on child development when conceiving the youth policy. One respondent spoke of the government-sponsored study on child development, known as the “Early Years Report” (Musterd and McCain 1999) as having had a major impact on his thinking about the significance of social contexts in shaping children’s life chances. He expressed : *“What I liked about this whole thing [the Early Years Study] is it took a more developmental perspective: we are all human...and there are clear developmental ages and stages of things. And context makes a difference, in terms of how one develops. But context does not have to be the barrier for positive outcomes in young people... Not all young people have same equal opportunities. If the goal of Ontario in creating the Ministry was about creating prosperous, healthy, vibrant young people who are going to be tax payers, if I can be so crass. There is a social policy agenda here that says, no. I, we want to focus on...the positive development of kids.”* In another part of the interview, the same respondent asserted that the strengths of the youth development approach is its commitment to enhancing the environments and abilities of young people at different stages of life, rather than trying to fix young people’s problem behaviors such as, delinquency. He explained *“it [the youth policy] was really from...the policy perspective of development and developing the opportunities of the young people. That’s the kind of basis upon which we looked at the Youth Opportunities Strategy, which is why we would not have looked at it as a “guns and gangs” kind of a thing. If that had been the case, we would have had our youth justice wing lead it. But it was really important that we not put it in the “problem” kind of areas. It was about putting it into the policy lens of “what could we do to better support the developmental trajectories of young people through to adolescence, into teenagers, into adults?””*

Another issue that policy-makers in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services say they were mindful of in designing the youth policy was the position of black youth and the ways in which they are impacted by racial inequality and discrimination. One respondent explained that consideration was given to “*subsets of young people, such as black young people who are from challenged communities, and think about what are the opportunities and what are the kinds things we need to give these young people in order for them to meet their full potential.*”

In another interview, a Ministry official explained that s/he pushed him/herself to think about the solutions the government could put into place to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, a comment that is surprising coming from a bureaucrat and one we usually associate with grassroots circles. In conceiving the youth policy, the official said s/he regularly asked him/herself the question: “*How could we [the Ministry of Children and Youth Services] cut off the school-to-prison pipeline for those kids. What could we do so that in 5 or 7 years these kids aren’t getting into trouble?*” It is safe to say from these and other comments from respondents that the youth policy of Ontario was race-conscious, although it remains debatable to what extent and how well the policy dealt with racial inequality and racism. In 2006, the major thrust of the youth policy was to assist black youth and other disadvantaged youth in overcoming barriers in their way and finding support to succeed at school and in the labor market. In other words, the policy sought to effect change in the lives of individuals, more so than institutions.

Conclusions

The chapter has sought to explain the reasons why the Ontario government established a youth policy 2006, two years after the City of Toronto had begun initiating policies to counter

the urban violence. Secondly, it has sought to explain the government's motives for singling-out "youth development" as the preferred strategy for solving the problem. The answer to the first question begins with the Boxing Day shooting in December 2005, which became a triggering event that unleashed public dissatisfaction with the government's apparent failure to prevent the tragedy from happening and protect public safety. For the first time, the gun violence had reached into mainstream Toronto and was no longer confined to low-income neighborhoods. The Liberal government, only two years in power, could ill afford not to take decisive action, or at least be seen to be taking the problem seriously. When the Liberal government was elected in 2003, it immediately began embarking on a spate of reforms, possibly in an effort to distinguish itself from its predecessor, the Conservative government, which had ended its time in power with low approval ratings. Thus, the policy change arose due to the combination of a "focusing event" and window of opportunity for reform and the electoral incentives of the Liberal administration.

The factors that drove the Ontario government to opt for a policy of "youth development" are distinct from the causes of the policy change, though undeniably related. The goal of the second half of the chapter was to trace the origins of an "idea," that is youth development, and examine where it came about, why it resonated with policy-makers, and why it was embraced. Results indicate that the idea was consistent with the perspectives of black political advocates, social democrats in Toronto, and the Liberal party. The concept of "youth development" provided a solution that resonated with left-wing currents in the city, was politically palatable, and had some scientific merit. The chapter has argued that the lobbying by black political actors, the history of social democratic politics in downtown Toronto, and the presence of a Liberal party inclined to strike a "Third Way" path between neo-liberalism and social democracy may have all created a context in which a policy of youth development would win support. Due to the

decentralized structure of decision-making in Ontario, black political coalitions in Toronto were able to participate directly in the policy debates and meet in person with elected leaders and policy-makers when the events unfolded in 2005 and 2006. The political and economic significance of Toronto on the provincial stage and as a setting for much policy innovation in Ontario cannot be ignored. The consensus among politicians, business elites, and philanthropies in the City of Toronto that improvements to the social infrastructure of high-poverty neighborhoods were urgently needed may have given the provincial government greater incentive to approve a policy of prevention and community-based social provision. Finally, policy-makers in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services incorporated concepts from the scientific and technical literature on child and youth development when formulating the youth policy. The idea of youth development certainly seems logical given the Ministry's mission; yet, its arrival blends in with a general trend towards social investment in Canadian social policy, in which targeted programs for children and youth are taking the place of universal social provision.

Chapter 4: Quebec's "Street Gang Intervention"

The *Street Gang Intervention* of Quebec (or "Plan d'intervention Québécois sur les gangs de rue") was an inter-ministerial policy led by the province's Ministry of Public Security, in collaboration with several government agencies and non-profit organizations in the province. The policy was approved in December 2005 and carried out in two successive three-year plans, one created for the period of 2007 to 2010, and the other for 2011 to 2014. Although the policy was only formally introduced to the public in 2007, police departments received the authorization to proceed with the deployment of new anti-gang squads in 2006, not long after the Prime Minister and his Cabinet endorsed the policy in late 2005. In comparison with Ontario, Quebec's solution to the urban violence was more singularly punitive and disciplinary. The financial support for prevention and community-based programs was meager in comparison with the investment in policing, prisons, youth detention, the courts, and intelligence services.

Though Quebec's strategy emphasized a disproportionate role for criminal justice as opposed to social provision when seen in comparison with Ontario, in both provinces the policy change was a direct reaction to incidents of urban violence in which blame was laid squarely on the behavior of young black males. In Quebec, racial stereotypes about the urban violence played a central role in elevating the sense of panic about the urban violence, feeding the social construction of lawless "street gangs," and justifying an aggressive clampdown on crime. In contrast with Ontario, black community organizations and black political representatives played no visible role in the policy-making process in Quebec, whether in behind-the-scenes negotiations or public consultations on the urban violence. Only hand-picked organizations with already established links with the Montreal police and the Ministry of Public Security were ever

consulted about the policy. The centralization of decision-making at the headquarters of the Ministry of Public Security in Quebec City resulted in a policy process that was dominated by the interests and perspectives of police chiefs in Quebec. Well before the policy process began in 2004, police chiefs had been actively lobbying the government to launch a full-scale assault on street gangs in Montreal.

Ultimately, Quebec's policy on street gangs was short-lived and lasted an official seven years, ending abruptly and unexpectedly in December 2015. While state administrators and some stakeholders were hoping the policy would be renewed in 2015 for another three year-term, the proposal failed to secure the support of Cabinet. The precise reasons for its closing remain unclear, though it can be said that the political climate had altered completely since 2005 and the subject of street gangs was no longer dominating the news as it once did. Despite this turn of events, certain elements of the policy remain in place. The multi-million-dollar investment in police departments has likely provided a long-term boost to policing operations in Montreal and the regional police squads. It is also worth noting that in 2016, the Ministry of Public Security approved a new three-year governmental plan against "sexual exploitation," in which one of the goals is to stop the apparent involvement of street gangs in the commercial sex industry in Quebec.

The present chapter discusses the policy-making process that culminated in the *Street Gang Intervention* in Quebec and explores the reasons why enforcement and punishment became the preferred solutions to the urban violence. It analyzes the historical backdrop to the policy process and illustrates how significant events at the federal, provincial, and city level all combined to lead the policy-making down one particular path, rather than another. The chapter argues that the policy change in Quebec, much like Ontario, arose out of a convergence between

multiple, inter-related factors that forced the government to act, especially when incidents of gun violence spilled over into mainstream public spaces and threatened feelings of public safety. The chapter proceeds in two stages: it first describes the factors that caused the policy shift to occur in 2005; secondly, it examines the role of political institutions, organizational interests, and ideas in shaping the design of the policy, including its structure and objectives.

Causes of the Policy Change

Respondents from the Ministry of Public Security interviewed for this study all expressed, in differing ways, that the policy change was not caused by any single factor, but rather by a combination of forces building up over time. The first movement began with the lobbying by police chiefs in 2002, who made repeated requests to elected officials in the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Justice to support a provincial strategy against street gangs and finance regional anti-gang police units, one for Montreal and adjoining cities and one for Quebec City. On the two separate occasions when the police departments of Montreal and Quebec City made independent funding requests to the Ministry of Public Security—the Ministry under which they operate—they were denied. Only on the third occasion were they successful in obtaining the Ministry's approval, and not coincidentally because of an outbreak of gun violence in Montreal a few weeks earlier. At this stage, the Minister of Public Security agreed with police chiefs to begin the process of developing a provincial policy against street gangs, though no financial commitments were made until months later.

A total of three focusing events occurred in the early 2000s and played a role in fueling the sense of a crisis about urban violence and street gangs in Montreal. An explosion of

sensational media articles connecting crime to racial stereotypes of black males followed, as reports indicated the primary offenders were black males. The three episodes were:

- 1) A police operation known as “Scorpion” in 2002, in which the Quebec City police arrested the leaders of a child prostitution ring operating in the city. The event caused panic and anger in the media and was followed by public protests in Quebec City. The arrests focused on the identities of the black males involved in the network. The affair also stirred considerable controversy because it was found that several male clients of the prostitution ring were well-known members of Quebec City’s francophone entertainment and business elite.
- 2) A gun shooting in 2003 at an after-hours club in a suburb on the outskirts of Montreal, in which several people were injured.
- 3) Another outbreak of gun violence in the summer of 2004 in a busy street of downtown Montreal, where tourists and residents congregate in bars and restaurants.

Across 2002 and 2005, there was a flurry of political activity around the subject of street gangs both at the provincial and federal level. Officials from law enforcement and criminal justice in Quebec were regularly attending closed-door meetings and consultations in Quebec City and Ottawa where the conversation was centered on the apparent increase in “street gangs” in the country and the possibility of forming a policy for the province as well as the country. One administrator in the Ministry of Public Security remembers the period immediately preceding the policy change as a moment of “effervescence” in which street gangs were constantly being talked about in the press and in government policy circles, not just in Quebec but also at the

national level. In another interview, a respondent who had worked on the first policy in 2005 recalled, with some degree of cynicism, that the topic of street gangs had become rather fashionable and may even have sparked a race for federal dollars. S/he declared: *“At one point you look at the federal level and you see that it’s a fashion. It’s how you will get money, like when terrorism arrived. You know you will get funding. Well, you saw people who were seeing terrorists everywhere. It was the flavor of the day, the employee of the day.”*

From interviews with policy-makers, administrators, and police officers who were knowledgeable about the origins of the policy, several distinct influences can be distilled: a) an increasing interest in street gangs as an issue of public policy at the provincial and federal level; b) focusing events and a spike in media coverage on street gangs in the early 2000s; c) growing anxiety among law enforcement officials, especially in Montreal, that the problem of gun violence was beyond their control and that gangs were extending beyond the city and into other regions of the province. In the following interview, an administrator who helped devise the plan in 2005 reflects on the broader political climate of the period: *“There were events [gun shootings], particularly in Montreal, that well, made the issue of street gangs more tangible, a little more concrete. The media started to talk about the phenomenon of street gangs, and it was arousing a bit of anxiety. People were talking about it, the media was saying that we were starting to import this model from the United States, and that it would be important to attack it. On the other hand, the police departments were worried as well, and it was a phenomenon that was new, and they were having difficulty grasping it, comprehending it. So, they turned to the Ministry [the Ministry of Public Security] to say, it would be important to do something.”* The quote below from another respondent in the Ministry reinforces the claim that a multiplicity of factors came together in the mid-2000s to propel the policy change.

“[There was the information] the police were demonstrating in relation to the reality of street gangs. There were many conferences, at which the Minister of Public Security even participated. It was not just employees who were reporting the information [on street gangs]. The Minister was sitting in the room and there was a conference by the SPVM [Montreal police service], by the Quebec police service, and other organizations that were the most affected by the problem of street gangs. And then there were the gun shootings. Well, there was an effervescence, there was pressure. For a problem of that kind, media pressure also has an effect.”

Another important factor not highlighted in the above quotes was the decisive influence of the Prime Minister of Quebec, who came to the decision in the fall of 2005 that street gangs would be a top government priority and who subsequently authorized the Ministry of Public Security to devise a three-year action plan that could be renewed indefinitely. When the Prime Minister handed down his decision, the policy moved from being an initiative solely of the Ministry of Public Security to becoming a full-fledged effort, in which a host of ministries were expected to contribute. As a respondent explains in the following quote, the Prime Minister’s decision gave policy-makers in the Ministry of Public Security the authority to deploy the resources of the state and to call upon fellow ministries to invest their resources. She explained: *“What is important to understand with governmental plans is that, irrespective of the problem, it has the effect of justifying an action, because after, when you go to meetings, there is a plan and*

everyone is a partner in the plan. It motivates people to act, and it permits us to use existing structures or existing funding programs and to color them with the theme street gang.”

As indicated in Chapter Three, in the fall of 2005 the federal government was preparing to release a multi-million-dollar budget for provincial police forces to fight against “youth gangs” and the spread of illegal weapons in urban areas. It is not known if the Quebec’s Prime Minister was influenced by this federal transfer. It may be safe to say that the \$42 million-dollar budget promised to Quebec in 2005 was one incentive for the Prime Minister of Quebec and his advisers to move ahead when they did and to raise street gangs to a top priority. Months before the federal announcement, the Quebec government had not yet determined how it would fund the policy. Elected officials in Quebec had only agreed to invest \$30,000 annually in the hiring of a provincial coordinator on street gangs. This was to be the Quebec portion of the salary, and the other part would be paid for by the federal government. Prior to 2005, the expectation was that the policy would not require any substantial new funds. For example, for the anti-gang squads requested by the police departments of Montreal and Quebec City, the tentative goal was to re-deploy the same units that had been created in the 1990s to squash a conflict between “biker gangs” (popularly known in French as the “Motards”).

It is worth remembering that Canada has been living under a political climate of financial austerity for years and administrators claim that politicians are chronically averse to spending new money and will only do so under compelling circumstances. When the policy first came under discussion in the mid-2000s, the government was led by the Liberal party, which had campaigned only a few years before in 2002 on a promise to “re-engineer” the state and radically cut-back public finances. The party’s campaign quickly fell apart, due to large and organized protests by unions and social movements across the province. When policy-makers were asked to

draft the policy in 2004, the instruction was that they should limit spending and utilize existing budgets and programs as much as a possible. When the multi-million federal transfer arrived in 2005, it not only relieved Quebec of the burden of finding money to pay for the policy, but also allowed authorities to set out an ambitious strategy, one that would have otherwise been impossible to finance. For example, instead of two anti-gang squads, the Ministry of Public Security went on to create six, and in regions with no evidence of any similar problems.

In an interview, an administrator in the Ministry of Public Security played down the significance of the federal transfer in driving the policy change, and insisted the Ministry was already well-advanced in developing a policy by the time October 2005 arrived. It is true that by the fall of 2005, officials in the Ministry of Public Security had been working on a policy on street gangs since the Minister had given his support a year earlier, and policy-makers were gearing up to produce a second draft of the policy after receiving feedback from partners. The respondent stressed that the policy change was due not to any single factor alone, but to a convergence of historical forces. In the quote below, s/he points out key moments in the policy process: the federal funding, the Prime Minister's authorization, public opinion, incidences of homicide in Montreal, and the police's operation against a child prostitution network uncovered in Quebec City (i.e., *Scorpion*). In the opinion of this respondent and others, the Prime Minister's authorization and the federal funding did not *cause* [italics mine] the policy change; rather, the effect it had was to accelerate a policy-making process that was already underway and to increase the size and scope of the policy. The following is a quote from this administrator:

“I would say it was a whole assortment of factors that came together. It's certain that the possibility of federal funding didn't hurt. And the demand from the Prime

Minister. The fact that the Prime Minister was also a supporter of the strategy for youth [Stratégie action jeunesse]. He wanted to make sure the generation of young people was doing well. Public opinion in all of that, it's certain it plays a role. There were homicides. There was Scorpion. It's an amalgam of a whole bunch of things."

When the policy was being considered for a second renewal in 2015, the political climate around the subject of street gangs had completely altered. The appetite for a large-scale strategy had died down, street gangs were no longer receiving the same amount of news coverage, and outbursts of gun violence had grown infrequent. Administrators claim that even when the first renewal of the policy came under consideration in 2010, it was a challenge to get elected officials to approve it. The policy process was not as automatic as it had been in 2005 and considerably more energy and time had to be invested in convincing deputy ministers and the Minister of the policy's relevance. In the following quote, an official from the Ministry of Public Security describes how it was an uphill battle to get the plan renewed in 2010 for another three-year term: *"it was a hard work to get the plan renewed. It is a lot of negotiation at the political level. At the level of the image. [The questions are] Do we or do we not continue? We have other things to worry out. Is it always a priority? How much money do we put into this?"* When the second renewal was being considered in 2015, the sense of urgency and political support had disappeared, said one official: *"they didn't see the pertinence...there was no sense of urgency."* According to another respondent, *"well, we*

knew there was less interest [in street gangs] in the media. There were fewer shootings or anyway, there were few events that disturbed the population.”

In 2005, the *Street Gang Intervention* did not have to go through all the usual steps any piece of legislation or policy must go through to be tabled and accepted. Respondents from the Ministry of Public Security described the 2005 policy as an “order” from the Prime Minister, which quickly speeded up the approval process. In the following quote, a respondent explains how the policy-making process was shortened in 2005 once it became a priority for the Prime Minister: *“the policy-making process is sprinkled with obstacles. It’s deliberate. There are many, many, many stages, requirements. You have to have all the necessary tools, everything required... You have to be particularly motivated...However, when the order comes from the Minister, well, then it’s much easier. We don’t have to do any convincing internally. But even in this case you still have to pass through the same stages...it’s a minimum of six months.”*

The following historical narrative illustrates the step-by-step process by which the policy change came about, and the key moments and turning points in the years leading up to 2005. The information offers an illustration of the larger political context that was building around the subject of street gangs and how specific events helped to catapult the issue of urban violence to the top of the policy agenda, first in 2004 and again in 2005.

2002

- Six people are injured in a gun fight at an after-hours bar in a middle-class suburb of Montreal. The perpetrators are alleged to be member of rival street gangs. The Minister of the MPS holds a meeting with police chiefs to explore solutions to gun violence. The

Minister and police chiefs agree to develop an action plan on street gangs for the regions of the province most affected. Police chiefs also propose the creation of two regional police squads: one for the cities of Montreal, Laval and Longueuil, and a second for Quebec City.

- Days later, the police chiefs meet separately with the “Sécurité du Québec” (SQ), the provincial law enforcement agency. The SQ proposes the establishment of a provincial coordinating committee on street gangs to facilitate cooperation between police departments.
- The Montreal and Quebec police departments submit funding proposals for regional anti-gang policing to the Ministry of Public Security. The two proposals fall through the cracks, due to a change in leadership, and the funding is not awarded.
- The Quebec City police department formulates its own policy against street gangs and presents it to the Ministry of Public Security. The Ministry refuses to award any funding to the plan. In the same month, the Montreal police submits a second funding proposal for a regional anti-gang squad, and it too is turned down by Cabinet.
- A federal committee that comprises law enforcement and criminal justice representatives from across Canada meets and decides that youth gangs will be a new strategic priority. The special committee on organized crime of the federal government also decides to create a working group on youth gangs, which is then asked to put together a plan for the country.
- Controversy and public protests erupt in Quebec City after the police expose and dismantle a child prostitution network active in the city, an operation called “Scorpion.”

2004

- In the summer of 2004, gun shootings break out in a busy commercial and tourist setting of downtown Montreal.

- The Minister immediately calls the association of police chiefs to a meeting to discuss the gun shootings. The police chiefs once again press the Minister to fund their anti-gang police squads.
- The deputy minister of the Ministry of Public Security instructs administrators in the division for policing and prevention to establish a sub-committee on street gangs, which would then draft an action plan and outline possible funding scenarios for the Ministry.
- The Montreal police department unveils its own policy against street gangs and presents it to the new provincial sub-committee on gangs.

2005

- In spring, the sub-committee on street gangs receives and evaluates the first draft of the provincial policy. Representatives of social service agencies on the committee criticize the policy for being “too repressive.” Policy-makers are asked to make revisions. A few weeks later, a second draft of the policy is submitted to authorities in the Ministry of Public Security.
- In the fall, the uprisings explode in the Paris suburbs following the fatal police shooting of two young racial minority men. After consulting with administrators in the Ministry of Public Security, the Prime Minister of Quebec declares street gangs a priority of his administration and instructs policy-makers to fast-track the policy.
- Simultaneously, the federal government announces it will transfer a multi-million-dollar budget for the provinces to fight against street gangs and illegal guns.
- In December, policy-makers in the MPS submit a final version of the policy and it is subsequently approved by the Treasury and Council of Ministers of Quebec.

Focusing Events and the Media

Across the interviews, respondents from the Ministry of Public Security were unanimous in asserting that media coverage of the urban violence in 2004 and 2005 played a direct role in building the sense of political urgency around the urban violence. Had the urban violence not become such a heated and public issue in the early 2000, it is not altogether certain the policy process would have gone as far as it did. As already indicated, it was only after gun shootings broke out in public spaces, when the safety of the larger public became a primary concern, that politicians were persuaded to act. Media coverage of urban violence and acts of delinquency and crime committed by racial minority youth had been gathering pace since the 1990s, although the quantity of the coverage is said to have exploded in the 2000s. One respondent claimed the intensity of the media coverage at that time made it nearly impossible for the government not to act or at least be *seen to act* (my italics). S/he stated, “*there was an obligation there. I believe the government did not have the choice but to do something.*” In another interview, a respondent claimed the media coverage of gun shootings in those years significantly intensified the sense of political urgency. S/he indicated: “*I believe it was highly publicized, at some point. It was really an issue that was well-publicized and seized the public at the same time as politicians, and the necessity of acting...[and then] we had the money [from the federal government]. That’s it, the government told us to act. You go ahead and sweep criminals off the street, and you do prevention. It was easy. It accelerated the process, and made it easier to get funding.*”

It is not an overstatement to argue that a moral panic emerged around street gangs in the early 2000s in Quebec (Castillo and Goyette 2013). Though there were valid reasons to be

concerned about the violence, the intensity and dramatic nature of the media coverage appears to have outweighed the true extent of the problem. Respondents from the Ministry of Public Security themselves asserted that the media coverage was frequently sensationalistic and inaccurate. An official in the Ministry of Public Security recalled, “*it was crazy how the media was interested and would distort the problem.*” Another governmental official who was involved in the policy, though from a different ministry, remembers a period of media frenzy in the mid-to late 2000s when news articles about street gangs were being published on a daily and weekly basis. Researchers who have studied the media coverage on street gangs in Quebec speak of a strong and consistent pattern of racialization of street gangs, in which black and Latino males were made out to be the main culprits (Brousseau, Guay and Fredette, 2015; Symons 1999; Laramée, 2012). One study also concluded that the mainstream media would routinely select the most dramatic and violent of incidents to publish (Laramée 2012).

The academic literature outlines four criteria by which to define a moral panic and all four were visible in the media coverage on “street gangs” in the early 2000s in Quebec (Laramée 2012; McCorckle and Miethe 2002). First, a moral panic always concerns the behavior of a subgroup within society that is stigmatized and/or seen as deviant and outside the norm. The more marginal and powerless the group, the easier it is for a moral panic to catch on and spread. Secondly, a moral panic exists when media coverage of an issue is overblown; in essence, the perceived magnitude of the issue is disproportionate to its actual scale. Thirdly, a moral panic tends to be short-lived and waxes and wanes in tune with changing political circumstance. Finally, a moral panic is most often manufactured by law enforcement, in collaboration with the media (McCorkle and Miethe 2002). For law enforcement agencies, moral panics allow them to defend their legitimacy and secure resources. For the media, police officers are the major

gatekeepers for news about crime, and so journalists are inclined to stick to the same storylines as law enforcement (Laramée 2012). McCorkle and Miethe (2002) claim that under a moral panic, law enforcement will tend to portray a crime threat as imminent and liable to get out of control if not immediately controlled. These were precisely the claims police chiefs in Quebec articulated to the Ministry in the early 2000s.

In addition to the general media climate on street gangs in the early 2000s, distinct “focusing events” had a disproportionate impact on the decision-making of elected officials in the Ministry of Public Security. As discussed in Chapter One of this dissertation, a “focusing event” is a sudden, often explosive incident, that generates intense media and public attention because of the danger it is seen to pose to a society or a community. Focusing events, according to Kingdon (1995) create “policy windows,” an opening for policy entrepreneurs and interest groups to compete for their favored policy to be considered. The first focusing event in Quebec happened in 2003, when several individuals were injured in a gun fight at an after-hours bar in a suburb of the Island of Montreal. Within the same week, the Minister called the police chiefs to a meeting to discuss the shootings. At the meeting, they agreed that a provincial strategy for the regions of Quebec most affected by street gangs ought to be created, yet nothing firmer came out of the meeting. In the meantime, the police departments of Montreal and Quebec City submitted proposals for funding to pay for new regional anti-gang police squads. The Ministry denied them the financing. Little progress was made on the policy until September 2004, when gun violence broke out again in Montreal and the Minister convened a second meeting with police chiefs. The gun violence on this occasion seems to have elevated the sense of alarm, because the shootings took place in a busy, downtown shopping area of the city where hundreds of

people congregate every day. At this second meeting, the Minister and police chiefs agree to deploy the resources of the state in order to better understand and grapple with the problem. The policy-making process begins in earnest and a first draft of the policy is completed several months later in spring 2005.

Another turning point in the policy process occurred in October 2005, when the uprisings in the Paris suburbs exploded due to the fatal police killing of two young racial minority males. Upon seeing these events, the Quebec Prime Minister turned to his advisers and asked if a similar crisis could unfold in Montreal. The response from advisers was that such an eventuality was unlikely in Montreal, but that a provincial strategy against street gangs was still worth pursuing in order to prevent problems from worsening. After receiving this advice, the Prime Minister took little time to declare street gangs a priority of his administration. At this pivotal stage, a focusing event (i.e., Paris) did not exert an immediate effect on the agenda-setting, although it did persuade politicians, principally the Prime Minister, to pay closer attention to the issue. The Prime Minister ultimately based his decision on the advice of administrators in the Ministry of Public Security, the same team of administrators that had been busy drafting a policy for already a year.

The third focusing event that bore an indirect impact on the policy was the public controversy over the child prostitution network uncovered in Quebec City in 2002. While the child commercial sex operation was not controlled by youth nor by a so-called street gang, the media portrayed it in that light. When the controversy broke out, well-connected individuals from Quebec City went knocking on the doors of officials, demanding they do something about sexual exploitation. In addition, local organizations made vocal appeals in the press, calling on the government to take swift and decisive action. In the following quote,

an administrator from the Ministry claims local non-profit organizations would sometimes make strategic use of the media to turn the spotlight onto their issues and pressure the government into releasing funds. S/he reflected: *“[There are] citizens, organizations who like to feed the media. Recently we saw it with sexual exploitation. It was covered a lot in the press. But there were community organizations that were saying yes, we receive teenager girls who are engaged in prostitution and we don’t have the means to assist them. But the game that’s going on behind that is, we know, maybe there is an action in the works and there will be money. Therefore, in terms of media coverage, the street gang issue was nourished quite a lot.”*

Throughout the interviews, respondents suggested the Ministry of Public Security is caught in a constant battle with the press, either trying to stay ahead of scandals or taking direct action in response to criticisms and incidents reported in the media. One respondent went so far as to say that most of the Ministry’s policies arise in reaction to media coverage, rather than the reverse. S/he cited the recent case of the policy against sexual exploitation, which had been raised to priority status and fast-tracked after the high-profile press coverage of young women who had absconded from detention centers after being supposedly saved from commercial sex work. The press cried foul and government authorities were held responsible for allowing it to happen. The same respondent explained that only days before, the Ministry had been forced to react once again to an article in a French daily accusing the Quebec police of being less effective than in Ontario in controlling the commercial sex industry. In the following quote, the respondent describes how the Ministry was forced to issue an immediate public statement, reassuring the public that it had established a policy to deal with sexual exploitation. S/he expressed: *“the Ministry was forced to respond that it was handling the issue [sexual*

exploitation of young women]. That it had policies in place. That strategies were already being implemented. Strategies that are robust...and that a plan against sexual exploitation is in progress.”

Federal Policy

Observers from within Quebec were more likely to emphasize the impact of local events and actors on the policy change, and diminished the significance of the federal transfer of money in 2005 as a factor that was “in the picture,” so to speak, but not necessarily pivotal. It is true that the policy change was already well underway by the time the federal transfer came about in the fall of 2005. However, it is hard to believe that the policy discussions happening on street gangs at the federal level during those years did not give Quebec officials some incentive to push forward when they did. In addition, no one knows if the Prime Minister of Quebec would have been as ready to declare street gangs a priority in October 2005 if the federal government had not been preparing to release a multi-million-dollar budget. One thing is certain: the *Street Gang Intervention* would not have been as extensive or as ambitious without the \$42 million-dollar budget from the federal government. As indicated earlier, by the spring of 2004, elected officials in Quebec had committed to paying only \$30,000 for the salary of a provincial coordinator on street gangs, with the rest covered by the federal government. In light of these factors, it might be said that the federal government’s influence on *Street Gang Intervention* was at once ideological and instrumental; it lent legitimacy to the fight against street gangs, and bolstered and broadened the policy’s overall size and scope.

It is also worth noting that the subjects of public security and crime are ones that seem to involve a characteristically high level of multi-level collaboration between municipal, provincial, territorial, and federal authorities in Canada. As described earlier in the chapter, law enforcement officials from Quebec sit on federal committees in which they meet regularly with national representatives to share information and plan policy. In other areas of public policy in Quebec, such as health and education, provincial agencies possess greater independence vis-à-vis the federal government. The policy process on street gangs in Quebec was surprisingly similar in timing and substance to discussions that were happening at the federal level at the time. For example, in a meeting of federal, provincial, and territorial agencies in 2002, participants agreed to establish youth gangs as a new strategic priority in the fight against organized crime in Canada. The federal government then immediately launched a committee, which was given the responsibility of drafting a national policy against youth gangs. By December 2003, the committee had finished a first draft of the federal action plan. By May 2004, a second version of the federal policy was ready to be examined and approved. Though the final contents and execution of that strategy remain unknown, it is interesting to note that the broad outlines of the federal policy on youth gangs and Quebec's own strategy were roughly similar. In both cases, the main objectives were: 1) creation of a communication strategy to inform the broader public about gangs and engage local communities in mobilizing against gangs, 2) formation of multi-disciplinary teams in which law enforcement, immigration and border security collaborate together (similar to the anti-gang policing and investigative units of Quebec), 3) a national strategy to support research on street gangs.

Political Institutions

The ultimate power to approve, delay, or reject any given policy rests with the Treasury and Cabinet. Before any policy even reaches that final stage, it must first be accepted by the deputy Ministers and the Minister of Public Security, who then take it upon themselves to present it to the Cabinet. As shown earlier, the idea of launching a provincial strategy against street gangs did not originate with elected officials in the Ministry of Public Security, but rather with police chiefs, who began lobbying the Ministry in the early 2000s, at least a couple of years before the Minister finally agreed to authorize it in the fall of 2004. The Minister seems to have been convinced of the need for a policy against street after an outbreak of gun violence in the summer of 2004. As indicated earlier, prior to the events of that summer, the Ministry of Public Security had, on two separate occasions, refused to approve the funding requests submitted by police chiefs from Montreal and Quebec City.

In the fall of 2004, the precise scope of the policy and its budgetary allocations were still uncertain. The Minister agreed with police chiefs to look at ways of paying for the salary of a provincial coordinator and re-distributing existing police units towards street gangs, though no further financial commitments were made. Everything changed when the Paris uprisings occurred in October 2005 and the province's Prime Minister suddenly took notice. The Prime Minister was told that while violent protests were unlikely to occur in Montreal, the situation could easily get out of hand if something were not done to prevent it. The Prime Minister subsequently authorized the Ministry of Public Security to form an action plan. In the quote that follows, an administrator within the Ministry of Public Security explains how the order for the policy came first from the Prime Minister, who then delegated the responsibility to the Minister of Public Security, and he then instructed his deputy Ministers to take the lead. The Deputy Ministers subsequently informed the directors of the appropriate department to work on creating

the policy. S/he recounted: *“The preoccupation came from the Prime Minister. It was an order from the Minister. The Minister sent the order down to the associate deputy ministers. Then, it landed on our desks. When it falls on our desk, we come up with a response that builds on actions that were already exploring or pursuing and that align with the government’s agenda.”*

Around the time the policy for Phase 1 was being discussed, it so happened that the deputy ministers of the Ministry Public Security had both spent their careers in the police service. According to one respondent, the backgrounds of the deputy ministers may have made them more willing to support the *Street Gang Intervention*, because of their former ties to police services. More than once, respondents indicated that once elected, elected officials in the Ministry will try to promote and advance their “pet projects.” The current Minister is apparently a fan of prevention and has taken every opportunity since he was appointed to speak of his commitment to strengthening the Ministry’s involvement in prevention. The following quote from a respondent sums up these observations: *“Depending who is there [in office] and his/her beliefs about intervention...here we had an associate deputy minister and deputy minister who were both from the police force, so it oriented things a bit. The priority was more on police during the first and second plan. It’s the first time we see such a great interest in prevention [with the current Minister]. And he [the Minister] says it every time he goes out, that he wants more for prevention and that we can expect to see actions.”* In another interview, a respondent pointed out that when police chiefs were lobbying the Minister of Public Security and Minister of Justice for the policy in the early to mid-2000s, they were acting in collaboration with deputy ministers. In other words, the deputy Ministers from the Ministry of Public Security and Ministry of Justice—both of whom had risen through the ranks of the police force—were on the side of police chiefs when they were busy lobbying the government to fund their anti-gang squads.

In *Street Gang Intervention*, career bureaucrats within the Ministry of Public Security played a role in convincing the Prime Minister to approve it in the fall of 2005. As permanent staff, administrators in the Ministry of Public Security claim their role is strictly advisory and they possess neither the authority nor the capacity to influence policy decisions. Yet, they explained that they will often keep several dossiers active and prepare themselves for the possibility that new issues will come up on the Ministry's policy agenda. When the Prime Minister turned to his advisers to ask if uprisings like the ones in Paris could occur in Montreal, administrators in the Ministry of Public Security who had already been busy drafting the policy were asked to render their advice. A respondent described the moment in this way: *"Instead of telling the Prime Minister that we don't have any problems at home, that it should not happen, we took the occasion to say that despite this, there are things happening among youth that are important and it would be a good idea to put in place an action plan against street gangs that would simultaneously address components such as the circulation of guns, intimidation...The dossiers on which we were already working."* In another interview, a respondent insisted on the crucial role of one top administrator at the time, a person who was well-connected in and outside the Ministry and who had been outspoken in recommending a full-scale strategy against street gangs in her/his meetings with senior officials. S/he explained, *"And it is a bit [name of the administrator and department head] who initiated, who had the will to say, 'we have to intervene on street gangs' and it is him/her who started to take steps so that we could attack the problem."*

Although the *Street Gang Intervention* would never have seen the light of day had it not received the go-ahead from the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, the very idea of a provincial strategy against street gangs originated with the Quebec police chiefs' association. Without their

role as policy entrepreneurs, the subject of the urban violence might have been interpreted and handled in entirely different way and not received the amount of high-level attention.

Within the Ministry of Public Security and Ministry of Justice, the police chiefs' association holds a privileged position vis-à-vis Ministers and deputy Ministers and regularly advises them on issues requiring attention and action. Police chiefs are viewed as being at the "frontlines" in the fight against crime and best placed to know when issues are worthy of attention or not. One respondent described the police chiefs as holding a position that is "very, very, very present" at the political level. In his own words, *"the association of police chiefs, at the level of the Ministry of Public Security and Ministry of Justice, is very, very, very present. It is they who must alert the authorities. You cannot follow the parade. You have to be ahead of the parade."* For one official who was part of the lobbying effort organized by police chiefs, s/he credits the policy change to what s/he called "the base," that is, the police chiefs' association and deputy ministers. When questioned about the influence of the Prime Minister on the policy change in 2005, the same respondent claimed that when the policy was announced, the Prime Minister received the credit, but the real work of conceiving and advocating for the policy came from "the base." The following is the respondent's comment in full: *"At the political level we were told, 'ok it's alright, the Prime Minister is responsible for the policy.' But the Prime Minister did not see the problem of street gangs in his tea cups...in his tea leaves in the morning over breakfast. It came from the base, and the base brought it up [to a higher level]."* He added, *"it is the Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Security who made the recommendations, [and] who pressed for the policy."*

Throughout the early to mid-2000s, police chiefs were actively lobbying and briefing deputy ministers and the Minister about the subject of street gangs and recommending an

integrated provincial strategy that would allow police departments to cooperate more closely. Police chiefs were convinced that the same inter-departmental strategy that had been used in the fight against “biker gangs” in Quebec in the 1990s would work successfully with street gangs. In the 1990s, police departments had formed “regional squads” in which to allow teams of federal, provincial, and municipal police officers and intelligence personnel to work together in surveilling and clamping down on the “biker gangs.” An official from the Ministry described how the model of the regional squads was re-deployed for their fight against street gangs: “So, *we took the successful method with the biker gangs and the “mixed regional police squads,” in which you can have in the same team, someone from the Montreal police, the Quebec provincial police, the [Canadian] Royal Mounted Police, and another body from the municipal police services. In other words, mixed teams. We wanted them to take off their organizational identities, “blue,” “green,” or “blue and black,” and work as a team. Thus, it’s a way of doing things that is effective. They develop their network and gain confidence in each other.*”

In the years leading up to 2005, police chiefs were pressuring the Ministry to initiate a province-wide scheme, because they insisted it was the only way for them to manage the issue, as one official remembers, “*We started to talk about it in 2004. The [police chiefs] knew not to wait until it spread [street gangs]. It was really necessary to control them, to intervene, and to give ourselves tools to act...because it was starting to spread. It was attaining a certain importance. And then, well evidently, we had to equip ourselves.*” Among police chiefs, the most vocal and active in lobbying for the policy were those from the police departments of Montreal and Quebec City, the two departments most eager to obtain funding for their own strategic plans on street gangs. One respondent claims the Ministry even modelled its policy on the Montreal department’s policy, because it looked as though it had literally been “copy and pasted.” He or

she explained: “*The four axes of the plan, it is copied from what Montreal was already doing for three or four years. It is copy and pasted. It’s literally that.*” Both the Ministry’s policy and the Montreal police department’s policy were built around the following four axes: repression (or enforcement), intervention, communication, and research.

Outline of the Street Gang Intervention Plan

The previous section described the factors that led up to the Prime Minister’s decision to authorize a provincial policy on street gangs in 2005. The present section shifts the attention onto the second phase of the policy process, when policy-makers elaborated the finer details of the policy. The policy writing team was made up of no more than three or four bureaucrats from the division for policing and prevention in the Ministry of Public Security, who worked in collaboration with an inter-ministerial working group formed in 2004 to lead and supervise the policy. When Phase 2 of the policy was being written in 2009, the social service agencies on the inter-ministerial committee had dropped out and officials from the Ministry of Public Security found themselves working alone to defend and advocate for the policy’s renewal.

Before policy-makers could present the draft policy for Phase 1 to Cabinet, it first had to be reviewed and endorsed by the members of the inter-ministerial working group. On the working group were representatives of the provincial and municipal law enforcement agencies, the criminal justice system, and social service ministries. The list of social service ministries on the committee for Phase 1 included: 1) the *Ministry of Health and Social Services*, 2) the child welfare department (which falls under the *Ministry of Health and Social Services*); 3) the *Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity*, and; 4) the *Ministry of Education, Sports and*

Leisure, as it was known at the time. Among the representatives from the child welfare department were senior researchers attached the agency's research unit, called the "Institute for Research on the Social Development of Children." The *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity, and Inclusion* (or the *Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities* as it was called then) joined the inter-ministerial working group only in 2007, after it had attracted the attention of policy-makers in the Ministry of Public Security for publishing a research report on the black community in Montreal. Once it came on board, the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity, and Inclusion* received a special budget of several million dollars from the Cabinet to distribute to community organizations working with racial minority and immigrant youth in Montreal. It was the only Ministry on the inter-ministerial committee to have been given a pot of money from the Cabinet and not expected to rely on its own reserves.

In forming the inter-ministerial working group, the Ministry of Public Security was hoping the social service ministries would take on the role of leading and financing prevention activities on street gangs, yet this did not materialize, at least not to the extent that policy-makers had envisioned. Apart from the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity, and Inclusion*, the other only active government agency on the working group was the child welfare department. The remaining three partners—employment, health and social services, and education—contributed little or nothing to the policy. In particular, the *Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity* did not supply any funding, was the least involved of all the Ministries and the first to drop-out of the working group. The department of education funded the production of a couple of pedagogical tools for primary and secondary schools on the theme of "street gangs." The *Ministry of Health and Social Services* agreed to dedicate one of its health periodicals to the topic of "street gangs." As time progressed, representatives from the social service ministries

gradually stopped coming to meetings and essentially dropped-out of the working group. By the time Phase 2 arrived, the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion* was the only government agency still showing up for meetings. Given the limited involvement of social service agencies, the policy was not the full-fledged inter-ministerial effort that it was expected to be. In the end, the leading proponents and participants in the policy were the state's coercive institutions—the same agencies that stood to gain the most materially and strategically from the policy—that is, law enforcement, prisons, courts, and child welfare.

The policy process for Phase 1 and 2 was a noticeably closed-door affair, open only to state agencies and a few well-connected non-profit organizations. Even the existence of the plan was kept quiet, because black community leaders interviewed for the present study were surprisingly unaware of its existence and could not recall ever having been invited to any meetings to discuss the policy. One of the few community organizations to have had any say in the policy process is a non-profit group involved in street outreach or “street work” (“travail de rue” in French) and with a presence in several neighborhoods across Montreal. One cannot help but wonder if the secrecy around the policy was deliberate, so as not to arouse any controversy or opposition. Had black community organizations been made aware of the policy, it is quite likely they would have raised concerns about its likely discriminatory impact on black youth. In the end, the policy did sour relations between the police and racial minority youth in neighborhoods where the anti-gang squads were deployed. In fact, the introduction of the anti-gang squads may be said to have played a causal role in precipitating an uprising in one neighborhood in 2009, after a police officer fatally shot an innocent young minority male. Quantitative data for the post-2006 period also showed that the proportion of black citizens randomly stopped and arrested by police officers in low-income neighborhoods had risen exponentially (Charest 2009).

In Phases One and Two of the *Street Gang Intervention*, up to 70% of the budget (\$42 million) went into law enforcement and the criminal justice system. The next most important component was “intervention,” which was managed by the child welfare department and consisted largely of clinical and counselling services to assist young people in avoiding or desisting from gangs. The budget for prevention came in third place, with a total of \$1.5 million per year allocated to non-profit organizations working on the prevention of juvenile delinquency and sexual exploitation across the province. A separate budget for prevention, of approximately \$3 million, was allocated to the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion* for Phase 1 and 2, and it awarded the funds to community organizations working with immigrant and racial minority youth in Montreal. The fourth component of the policy, research and communication, came with a budget of \$800,000. A veritable explosion of publications on street gangs would follow, produced by university faculty and by doctoral and masters’ students.

The support for law enforcement and criminal justice consisted of the following :

- 1) Creation of six regional investigative and police squads on gangs, modelled on the squads developed to end the conflict between so-called biker gangs in the 1990s. The squads were assigned to several major cities of the province, although the largest budget went towards the police departments of Montreal and Quebec City;
- 2) Appointment of a provincial coordinator on street gangs;
- 3) Recruitment of an “information officer” on street gangs for the province’s bureau for investigation;
- 4) Establishment of a provincial investigative unit on firearms and other lethal weapons;

- 5) Training to educate prosecutors and expert witnesses on ways to detect and manage cases of crimes committed by street gangs;
- 6) Creation of a provincial database on street gangs;
- 7) Training for prison personnel on managing the presence of gang members in jails;
- 8) Organization of an international conference on street gangs.

Explanations for the Policy Design

The following pages describe the key actors, perspectives, ideas, and organizational interests that played a role in the policy-making process. The findings suggest that the policy's focus on enforcement and detention was the end result of four key variables: a) the policy's institutional home in the Ministry of Public Security; b) the centralization of policy-making in Quebec; c) weaknesses in the inter-ministerial coalition, and; d) the backgrounds of the institutions and organizations with a strategic interest in the policy. The most active and enterprising groups on the inter-ministerial committee were police chiefs and the child welfare department of Montreal, two agencies that stood to gain financially and strategically from the policy. The child welfare department would go on to lead a multi-million dollar clinical and research program on street gangs. The absence of any significant cooperation from social service ministries on the committee produced a plan that was weak on prevention. These factors combined allowed the Montreal police's expertise on "street gangs" to be accepted as factual, even though it would later be shown to have been overblown and racially-biased.

Law enforcement and the Ministry of Public Security

From the outset, the chief goal of the *Street Gang Intervention* was to control the gun violence in Montreal. In the press and governmental circles, the incidents were framed above all as problems of public security and crime that were best handled by law enforcement. One official from the Ministry of Public Security recalled, “*it [the gun violence] was seen as a problem of public security. That is why it [the policy] started from the Ministry of Public Security.*” In another interview, an official claimed the resounding call from the media and the public at the time was for the government to be tough on crime and to swiftly arrest and punish the offenders. Inside the Ministry of Public Security, the conversation was slightly more nuanced and policy-makers understood that it was not enough to apprehend offenders if the violence was to be ended for good. The respondent stated: “*The question was posed in terms of...there was media pressure. There were injured victims. There were gun shootings. It was a question of public security. [The message was] Go ahead and sweep them off the streets, arrest them and put them in prison. And this was to some extent what the population was demanding. But, our discourse [as policy-makers] was to say, it’s good to arrest them, but there will be others. It is necessary to attack the roots of the problem.*”

Concerns with public security, whether real or imagined, were not the sole motivating factor for the policy, at least for the Montreal police. At the time, law enforcement in Montreal claimed it was struggling to comprehend and deal with violent conflicts that were erupting not only between rival groups of young people, but also between police officers and local residents. Apparently, physical altercations were flaring-up between police officers and groups of racial minority youth in neighborhoods of Montreal. Thus, one of the underlying goals of the policy

appears to have been to shore-up the capacity of the Montreal police in neighborhoods where its legitimacy and authority were under threat. The following quote from one of the policy-makers summarizes this opinion: *“In Montreal, there was the war between the Reds and Blues. There were street gangs, especially in [Neighborhood A] and [Neighborhood B]. There was the Crack Down Posse [name of one group] and the Reds. They were in conflict. We would arrest them and put them in detention. A whole range of things was happening. There was a lot of shooting, between [Neighborhood A and Neighborhood B], and there were situations where they [local youth] would encircle the police. Therefore, there was intimidation towards police officers. That was also a concern. It was a whole learning process at the level of intervention, to figure out how to intervene correctly. And the firearms as well. The preoccupation was with public security, because people were walking around with guns.”* A constant refrain in interviews with officials from the Ministry of Public Security was the belief that the urban violence in the early 2000s was entirely new and unfamiliar and that local law enforcement was feeling besieged by events it was neither able to comprehend nor bring under control. In the following quotation, an official goes as far as to depict the climate in those years as “anarchic,” which says something of the fear and bewilderment that authorities were experiencing at the time. The official indicated: *“Well, the phenomenon of street was very hard. There was a lot of violence. It is worse in the US but there were neighborhoods where it was almost anarchy. The neighborhoods were living under the reign of street gangs. There was this violence that was beginning to emerge in certain neighborhoods of Montreal that was worrying the local population, and on which police officers had no control. Because we didn’t know the phenomenon. And the local community sector was also confronted with this problem and wanted to react, but they didn’t necessarily know how and they didn’t have the resources to act.”*

The manner in which social problems enter onto the policy agenda is never value-neutral. The moral panic about street gangs in the mid-2000s in Montreal coincided directly with the timing of the policy change. It helped, among other things, to establish the case for the government to proceed with a swift and sweeping response to the violence. In a startling revelation published in a French newspaper in 2010, a senior official of the Montreal police admitted that the priority accorded to gangs in the mid-2000s had less to do with the actual threat of crimes committed by street gangs than with the sense of insecurity they were creating in the population. He explained, “[the prioritization of gangs] *It is absolutely justified. It is on the feeling of public security that we are intervening*” (Le Devoir 2010). In the same article, the director goes on to state that crimes committed by street gangs happen in public spaces, where the safety of the public is viewed as being most at risk. In contrast, the director explained, crimes like domestic violence happen behind closed doors and do not arouse the same level of fear and public unease. In his own words, the director stated: “*people have the impression that street gangs are gaining a lot, a lot, and a lot of impact, and probably a bit more than we see on the ground. Understandably, when you represent 2,3, or 4% of total crime, yet receive 60-70% of the media coverage, people have the impression that, on the ground, street gangs are proliferating and it is not necessarily the case.*”

In interviews, policy-makers in the Ministry of Public Security were prepared to admit that the original predictions about the threat of the violence in Montreal at the start of Phase 1 had been overstated. Already by Phase 2 of the plan in 2010, incidents of gun violence and homicide had begun to fall and racial stereotypes about a rise in mostly black youth gangs proved untrue. In the following quote, an official from the Ministry admits their projections

about the dangers posed by street gangs were overblown, and that race was a factor in heightening the sense of alarm and the risk assessment of young people's criminal tendencies:

“Yes, I think the phenomenon has been contained...controlled. Anyway, it does not have the same dimension. It lost its character. The worry at the beginning. As an unknown phenomenon, we didn't know where it would lead. We had the impression that these kids were hopeless...that they had nothing to lose, and were going to develop criminal careers. The worries were undoubtedly unjustified. And at the time, there was also a sense of failure in all of this. You know? For the society. [There was] A degree of incomprehension. We saw it as an expression of revolt [from youth]. The phenomenon of gangs began in 1996, 1997, and in 2000 we already had the first big conference on street gangs. The concerns were already there. We were searching...trying to understand what is this phenomenon. What can we do to understand it? Does the fact that it was mainly racial minority youth, did that provoke more concern? I would almost have to say yes, maybe yes.”

In the mid-2000s, the evidence that police units and criminologists were disseminating about street gangs was frequently anecdotal, vague, and rife with racial stereotypes. According to one police document, an estimated number of 12 street gangs were active in Montreal in the mid-2000s, with a total of roughly 350 members (Plante 2007). Not only do these figures seem low in comparison with the public portrayal of the threat, but they are quite possibly over-estimates, given the police's well-known tendency for inflating crime statistics. Other police reports for the same period reveal that street gangs were not committing a majority of homicides in Montreal in

the mid- to late-2000s. For example, one report shows that in 2006, 29% of homicides in Montreal, or 12 out of 42, were allegedly committed by street gangs.

Street Gangs and the Language of Organized Crime

One of the most profound implications of the law enforcement's role in developing the *Street Gang Intervention* was the decision to embrace a concept of street gangs that conflated youth delinquency with organized crime. The actual definition of a street gang was one coined by the Montreal police. In French, it states (Hamel et al. 2013: 8):

“Le gang de rue est un regroupement plus ou moins structuré d'adolescents ou de jeunes adultes qui privilégie la force de l'intimidation du groupe et la violence pour accomplir des actes criminels, dans le but d'obtenir pouvoir et reconnaissance et/ou de contrôler des sphères d'activités lucratives”

A translation of the definition in English follows: “A street gang is a network of adolescents and young adults that is more or less structured and uses intimidation and violence to carry out criminal actors, in the goal of acquiring power and recognition and/or controlling lucrative spheres of activity.” The policy document for the *Street Gang Intervention* also spells out three-part typology that describes street gangs as functioning along a continuum from “bands of delinquent youth” (“bandes de jeunes”), to emerging gangs (“gang émergents”), and major gangs (“gangs majeurs”). Both of these definitions imply that street gangs operate on the same general continuum as organized crime, and cover everything from minor acts of delinquency to

more serious cases of law-breaking. Such a slippery slope would seem to have given the police wider powers to intercept young people, especially when they are in groups, on the vague notion that they were either engaged in gang activity or liable to join one in the future.

The decision to associate street gangs with organized crime caused some friction among the social service partners involved in the *Street Gang Intervention*. In a final evaluation of the Street Gang Intervention, social service agencies reported that they found the concept of street gangs “too restrictive” and believed the Ministry of Public Security should not have conflated juvenile delinquency with adult organized crime, because they are much too distinct (Anstett, Sauvain, Jacob and Veil 2014: 45). According to community organizations, juvenile delinquency generally happens in ways that are spontaneous, fluid, and transient, and anything but organized. These disagreements over the definition of gangs plagued the policy from beginning to end and bore direct implications for the policy design. Social service departments on the inter-ministerial working group expressed reservations about the draft of the first policy in spring 2005, claiming it was “too repressive.” Policy-makers were then asked to revise the draft and establish a more even balance between enforcement and prevention. Unconfirmed reports about the first evaluation of the policy, completed in 2009, indicate that social service partners still found the policy too punitive, even after the revisions were supposed to have been made. It would appear, therefore, that debates in the early stages of the policy process did not fundamentally alter the law enforcement thrust of the policy. In Phase 2, a more serious attempt was apparently made to improve the policy’s support for community-based prevention, though the precise changes are unknown. One change would appear to have been the funding granted in 2007 for racial minority and immigrant youth in Montreal, which the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity, and Inclusion* was asked to coordinate and supervise.

Conceptions of Race and Delinquency

In devising the policy, policy-makers asserted that they were cognizant of the need for a multi-pronged strategy that would address not just the symptoms of the violence, but also its root causes. They explained that the Ministry of Public Security possesses neither the capacity nor the mandate to tackle the social dimensions of issues like youth delinquency, and sought out the cooperation of fellow social service departments for that purpose. Yet, the social service ministries on the inter-ministerial working group wound up playing limited roles, as will be explained in more detail later in the chapter. Despite this, the plan was presented in writing and publicly as an inter-ministerial effort, even if though the true extent of the partnerships remained low. In reality, the Ministry of Public Security remained the policy's primary author and leader.

The Ministry of Public Security is essentially the political and administrative arm of law enforcement and criminal justice. Its other responsibilities include border security, fire services, and disaster relief and management. As one respondent articulated, "*we have a function that is mostly repressive, and a small role in prevention.*" This disciplinary function of the institution would translate into a policy that privileges individual, psychological, and cultural explanations for delinquency and crime. For example, the policy says nothing about the wider structural and institutional contexts that produce urban poverty and racial exclusion. In addition, the document remains silent on racism and racial inequality. Social class and poverty are briefly acknowledged as causal determinants for delinquency, yet even here the weight is placed on individual and family-related factors, such as single-parent status, poor school performance, delinquent peers, and social disorganization (Ministry of Public Security 2007).

The *Street Gang Intervention* is presented as a race-neutral policy, even though it subtly and implicitly ties “race” to delinquency. The document for Phase 1 of the policy indicates that certain “cultural communities”—the euphemism for racial and ethnic minorities in Quebec—are more affected than others by street gangs (Ministry of Public Security 2007). Phase 2 of the policy uses a similarly vague term, “ethno-cultural milieu” (Ministry of Public Security 2010). The policy does not go further to explain exactly who these cultural communities are, and why they might be more affected than others by street gangs. By not clarifying the significance of race or racial inequality, the policy effectively reproduces racial stereotypes of youth delinquency by implying there is something unique or deficient about these communities that makes them more vulnerable to the most violent forms of delinquency, namely street gangs.

Policy-makers in the Ministry of Public Security consistently and firmly maintained that the policy was race-neutral and that its fundamental objective was to address a crime problem, which so happened to involve racial minority youth. According to them, the fact that black and Latino males in Montreal were generally associated with street gangs in the minds of the media, the public, and law enforcement played no role in the policy-making. A couple of respondents did admit, however, that one possible unintended consequence of the policy may have been to reinforce racial stereotypes of youth deviance, but that this was no fault of the government, but rather of the self-interested behaviors of organizations seeking media attention and funding.

When one official was asked if race was considered in the policy-making, the blunt answer was, “*at the political level, there was no concern with visible minorities.*” In the following quote, another respondent explains that the prime goal of the policy was to fight crime and that the racial identities of young people were only incidental and bore no implications for the policy design. S/he indicated, “*I believe...the concern would have been the same [whether or*

not the youth were racial minorities]. I think of the biker gangs. They were generating an enormous amount of concern. It's not become of who they represented, but because of their violence. At that time, there was a fear about these young people...And maybe an additional factor was that we knew they [the youth] were disgruntled. We knew they came from poverty, that they were living in poverty." In a third interview, an official was asked if consideration was given to the policy's potential impact on racial profiling, and she insisted if there was any profiling it was a profiling of "street gangs." In her words, s/he indicated, *"the issue for them [police chiefs] was to say that there is no racial profiling, but profiling of street gangs, in the same way that there is profiling of organized crime. They [police departments] work with facts, like they do for the Italians, the biker gangs."* In an earlier part of the interview, the same official would seem to have contradicted himself or herself by asserting that street gangs in that period were made of black youth, s/he expressed, *"it is certain that for the population of street gangs, it was black people."*

In general, questions about race and racial inequality in the interviews with Ministry officials elicited uneasy and contradictory responses. On the one hand, officials were prepared to admit that black males had become the public face of street gangs in those years, yet resisted any notion that the plan was not color-blind. The following quote from an administrator in the Ministry reflects the lack of clarity and confusion around the topic of race: *"At the level of organizations, in the enforcement of the law on street gangs, it was helpful to the cause not to point out the fact that we were talking about black youth. Because the branches of organized crime, we will talk about Italian crime, Arab crime...but we do not talk about black crime. Therefore, street gang was very much...for law enforcement...I am referring to the 2000 period...because today street gangs...it is not just blacks, and even in the 2000 decade I don't*

think we could say it was just blacks. But frequently, if there were gun shootings, it was very much related to blacks.”

The Americanization of Montreal Street Gangs

In developing their analysis on street gangs and devising the policy, policy-makers in Quebec relied significantly on the expertise of criminologists, including American experts and Canadian university researchers. Due to the absence of any available research on street gangs in Quebec and Canada at the time, policy-makers turned primarily to the American criminological literature for answers. Policy-makers and criminologists likely made this association with the US, because of their beliefs about the racial identities of youth gangs in Montreal. By drawing from the US experience, policy-makers also seem to have formed exaggerated fears about the likely threat of the violence in Montreal. In the following quote, a respondent from the Ministry of Public Security describe how the concern in the mid-2000s was that black youth Montreal were importing a violent culture from the US. He expressed: *“in the beginning, the concern was with the possibility that this culture would be imported, this fashion, the culture of gangs in the way that it was being played out violently in neighborhoods, in ghettos in the United States, in California, but mainly in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, where it was fundamentally...where it was on the basis of communities: Haitians, Puerto Ricans, Arabs, and...that was a concern.”*

In the years leading up to and during the policy-making process, criminologists in Quebec played a key role in building up the evidence to support the policy on street gangs, and largely by leaving unquestioned the implicit racial biases of the police. Criminologists and other social scientists writing on street gangs in Montreal made liberal use of concepts, findings, and

conclusions from the US to analyze and even depict the urban violence in Quebec, without ever pausing to consider the possible variations in the historical and political context of the two regions. Among the examples of state-funded research on street gangs that gave credence to racial stereotypes of youth gangs are two reports published not long before or around the same time that the *Street Gang Intervention* came under discussion. The first study was a qualitative investigation requested by the Montreal police in the mid-1990s and carried out by a team of Quebec researchers associated with the child welfare department. In the study, researchers completed interviews with 31 young people, all whom were said to have been active in a street gang either then or in the past (the study is the same one referred to above that was commissioned by the Montreal police). The entire sample of respondents was recruited from youth detention centers in Montreal, a somewhat unrepresentative group. In the conclusions, the authors write that most members of youth gangs belonged to “cultural communities” (i.e., racial and ethnic minorities). A more detailed look at the study sample reveals that a majority of the youth in the study, 16 to be exact, were actually white. The figures indicate that 12 youth had parents who were native-born (this group can be presumed to have been white, because a majority of racial minority youth in Montreal are the children of immigrants) and another three had parents who were born in Europe. The remaining 15 youth were a highly diverse group. Of the 15 youth, only five were identified as black (because their parents immigrated from the Caribbean or Africa). The remaining 10 youth included young people whose parents had been born in Latin America, the Middle-East, Asia and another region known only as “Other.”

Another startling and even more troubling example of racial bias in research on street gangs is an oft-cited report commissioned by the Canadian federal government (Chettleburgh 2002). Even though the report was published nearly two decades ago and is plagued with

methodological flaws, it continues to be referred to in federal government publications and even academic writings on gangs in Quebec (Dunbar 2017; Hamel, Alain, and Messier-Newman 2015; Tita 2007). In the report, the author claims that 51% of youth gang members in Quebec are “black.” The figure is based entirely on police reports, which have their own inherent limitations. In addition, the percentage is drawn from a total of only four questionnaires submitted by four different police departments located in unknown regions of the province. The study was based on a survey questionnaire that was sent to police departments across Canada, and police officers were invited to contribute voluntarily. The response rate in Quebec was one of the lowest.

The *Street Gang Intervention* made use of the American knowledge base on gangs not just in making sense of the urban violence, but also in determining the set of strategies to prioritize. When the policy change was approved in 2004, a team made up of officials from the Ministry of Public Security and law enforcement personnel, as well as criminologists from Quebec, went on two site visits to observe programs in American cities. This included a mission to “Operation Ceasefire” in Boston and one to the “Youth Violence Reduction Partnership” in Philadelphia. Both trips were financed by the National Crime Prevention Centre of the federal government, which regards the two programs as model interventions (National Crime Prevention Centre, 2008). Policy-makers reported that one of the major pieces of advice they retained from their discussions with experts in the US was the notion that the policy ought to be, in the words of one official, “multi-dimensional” and “multi-sectoral,” if it was to effectively address the complex dimensions of the problem. One official recounted the following: “*to approach that problem [gangs]...we couldn't just approach it from a unidimensional view. It is a bit what the celebrated researchers were telling us, like Spergel in Chicago. That the community must mobilize itself around the youth who are at risk. That we have to intervene at an early age. In*

essence, it is necessary to work as much on poverty, on employment, and schooling. [It is necessary to] work at the level of families, because the family is at the heart. With our limited resources, we had to figure out what we could do.”

Results from the interviews indicate policy-makers incorporated the advice of American experts in deciding to build the policy around the four different axes (i.e., enforcement, intervention, prevention and research and communication). In the following quotation, an official explains the thinking that went into the decision-making on these four axes: *“What we did with the plan, was to tell ourselves, we can’t just do enforcement. It achieves nothing to do just enforcement. It also achieves nothing to do only prevention. It is really necessary to have enforcement, intervention, and prevention. And at the level of information, it is also necessary to have communication and research. Evaluation was every important to us. Because I saw that in the US, you have research that is independent of government. We don’t have that in Quebec. We don’t have that in Canada. So, we tried to make sure this was done and that the research was disseminated. Often it [the research] stays internally. It has to be helpful to professionals.”*

Members of the Organizational Coalition

In formulating the policy, the policy-makers in the Ministry of Public Security worked closely with the inter-ministerial working group on street gangs. As indicated briefly in the previous section, the Minister instructed staff in the division for policing and prevention to establish an inter-ministerial working group on street gangs in 2004, which would be responsible for overseeing development of the policy. The working group was created as a sub-committee of the already-existing provincial committee known as the “Coordinating committee for efforts

against organized crime” (the “Comité de coordination des efforts de lutte au crime organisé” or CELCO for short). Unlike the coordinating committee on organized crime, which is composed solely of municipal, provincial, and federal law enforcement agencies, the inter-ministerial working group involved representatives of social service departments. As indicated earlier, the social service departments on the committee include health and social services, employment, education, immigration and diversity, and child welfare (known as Centre Jeunesse de Montréal). Academics associated with the *Institute for Research on the Social Development of Children*, a unit of the child welfare agency, were also members of the working group in 2004 and 2005.

The working group on street gangs was consulted throughout the policy process for Phase 1, though it appears to have been abandoned by the time Phase 2 arrived. For Phase 2, the Ministry of Public Security maintained an inter-sectoral committee to keep its members updated, yet, the committee played no decision-making role. In Phase 2, the working group also appears to have acted more in an advisory role and the Ministry retained the final decision-making power. The day-to-day work of gathering information, consulting with partners, and drafting the policy was handled by a team of career bureaucrats in the Ministry of Public Security. As described earlier, social service agencies on the working group expressed concerns about the first draft of the policy when it was presented to them in spring 2005 and argued it gave undue attention to enforcement. They recommended the policy team revise the draft and give more consideration to prevention and social development. As already suggested, there is reason to doubt their recommendations were fully considered, because the same critiques were leveled again when the plan came under evaluation in 2008, and it was still described as too heavy on enforcement.

The composition of the working group was one indication of the centralized, state-centered nature of the policy process. Non-state actors were not invited in nor consulted at any stage of the process, either in Phase 1 or 2 of the policy-making. The policy process was conducted entirely behind closed doors and kept fairly quiet; as indicated earlier, black community leaders interviewed in the Montreal site were unaware of the policy's existence. Respondents in the Montreal site for the study could name different parts of the policy, such as the controversial anti-gang police squad known as "Eclipse" or the financing available for community organizations to work on the prevention of street gangs; yet, they were not aware that these activities were part of the same overarching policy. As indicated earlier, the only non-profit organization to have had any close connection to the policy process for Phase 1 and 2 is one engaged in street outreach in the research site in Montreal. This particular organization was described by one official from the Ministry of Public Security as a close and trusted partner. The organization appears to have been one of the most prominent NGOs to participate in the discussions and fora organized on street gangs in Quebec in the early 2000s. It also seems to have cultivated a close working relationship with local law enforcement. Whenever law enforcement or the Ministry of Public Security sought a non-profit organization for its public meetings and conferences on street gangs, this particular organization was always involved, and often the only one. For example, the organization in question was the only NGO represented on an organizing committee for a provincial forum the police sponsored on street gangs in 2001. In 2009, it was the only NGO to have been invited by the Ministry of Public Security to give a presentation to a delegation from Belgium that came on a mission to observe what the province was doing on youth gangs. Even more surprisingly, for a focus group discussion on street gangs

the Montreal police organized in 2002, not a single black community organization was involved, yet the same NGO was present.

Coincidentally or not, the practice of “street work” became one of the main strategies the Ministry of Public Security recommended most highly for the prevention of street gangs and one it came to regard as a “best practice.” When the policy process began in 2004, the Ministry of Public Security financed a qualitative study into “street work” (Martel 2008). It subsequently hired the “Société de Criminologie” of Quebec to produce a technical handbook for community organizations on how to carry out “street work.” In an interview, an official from the Ministry indicated the Ministry’s investment in street work had been particularly effective in strengthening the cooperation between outreach workers and police officers. It is not clear, however, whether (or how) this type of cooperation has been beneficial to young people. The respondent explained: *“we knew we had to work at the street level. [To support] street work, and to improve the referral protocol, for street work. We also succeeded in establishing better links between street workers and police officers. Thus, it improved the exchange of information. So, we put a lot of attention on street work and “travail de milieu.””*

The above evidence suggests the policy process was restricted to a highly selective and well-connected group of actors. To be a part of this exclusive network, one had to be integrated into the professional and organizational networks of the Montreal police or the Ministry of Public Security. Evidently, black community organizations were not privy to these relationships. The one NGO with the closest relationship with the Ministry of Public Security, the “street outreach” organization, seems to have agreed (or at least been ready to go along) with the police’s point of view on “street gangs.” Therefore, the entire policy process was confined to groups and individuals whose views were consistent with the state, which kept the policy-making

from being subject to any serious debate and outside scrutiny, other than in deliberations with the inter-ministerial working group, as indicated earlier.

The inter-ministerial composition of the working group was supposed to lead to an integrated strategy, with different ministries making financial and technical contributions, but this did not materialize, to the dismay of officials in the Ministry of Public Security. Throughout, the cooperation between the Ministry and social service ministries remained tenuous and weak. The most active agencies on the working group were the those who benefitted the most financially from the policy: the *Ministry of Justice*, the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion*, and the child welfare agency of Montreal. The ministries of education, health, and employment were asked to contribute their own resources to the policy and remained the least involved. The *Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity*, as it was known then, was represented in the policy only in name, because it played no role. The ministries for education and for health and social services agreed to add the theme of street gangs and sexual trafficking to handful of educational and pedagogical tools created for primary and secondary schools in Quebec, otherwise they made no additional contributions.

Policy-makers in the Ministry of Public Security claimed they tried and failed to mobilize the support of social service ministries in the *Street Gang Intervention*, and interpreted their lack of interest in a variety of ways. In the following quote, an official describes the difficulties s/he and his/her colleagues encountered in mobilizing the ministries: “*We did the rounds of the ministries: education, health and social services, immigration and cultural communities. It [immigration and cultural communities] was one of the principal partners. Employment and Social Solidarity we had less success. They were more difficult to mobilize. It was very unpredictable, because they could not see what contribution they could make. They could not see*

how it [the issue of street gangs] concerned them. It was difficult...At the same time, the collaboration of other ministries was more formal than anything else.” According to one interpretation, the social service ministries showed a lack of interest in the policy because the issue of street gangs was a problem of crime that had little to do with their own mandates. Here is how one official expressed this view: *“it wasn’t resistance so much as incomprehension, to say to themselves, what are we doing in there? The phenomenon of street gangs, is a phenomenon that is purely criminal...so how does that concern the ministry of health and social services?”* Another respondent articulated a similar argument, though slightly differently: *“they could not see how they could involve themselves on the issue of street gangs. It was not in their niche. They were sensitized, they were informed. But there were no concrete actions that they managed to do in the policy. Therefore, they did not feel concerned.”* According to another respondent, governmental departments operate with rather well-defined mandates and possess limited leeway, financial or otherwise, to adapt their existing policies to issues that do not perfectly align with their missions. For the social service departments at the table, the conception of “street gangs” may have represented too significant a departure from their mandates and areas of expertise.

Another explanation put forward for the low cooperation of social service ministries was the absence of any financial incentives for them to participate. One official explained that the ministries that played little or no role in the policy were the same ones who were not promised any external funding under the policy. They had to turn to their own coffers to contribute. When the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion* was invited to come on board in 2007, it was given a budget directly from the Treasury, and did not have to rely on its own reserves, otherwise it may not have participated, indicated one well-placed government official.

Though it is impossible to determine, the social service ministries may have felt a certain unease or skepticism about the policy. In the evaluation of Phase 2, it is reported that some partners believed the Ministry of Public Security was making an “emotional decision” in deciding to establish the policy and reacting hastily to the media spotlight on street gangs (Anstett et al. 2014). Unfortunately, the viewpoints of these agencies were never obtained, because it was difficult to locate the individuals and/or offices associated with the policy in 2005.

Due to the limited roles played by social service ministries, the Ministry of Public Security found itself having to shoulder the major responsibility for financing the community prevention activities in the policy. It assigned a budget of \$1.5 million dollars per year for the entire province, funds that were taken from its “proceeds of crime” (a budget that fluctuates as a function of police operations, yet generally rises to several million dollars per year). As indicated earlier, the *Ministry of Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion* (MIDI) was awarded a three-year budget of nearly \$3 million dollars, once in Phase 1 and again in Phase 2.

One of the major players in the conception and implementation of the *Street Gang Intervention* was Montreal’s child welfare department, known as “Centre Jeunesse de Montréal,” which had been building its expertise on gangs several years before the policy process began in 2004. Its involvement originated with a two-part qualitative study on street gangs the agency completed for the Montreal police department, including the study cited earlier (Hamel et al. 1998). The research project, entitled “Jeunesse et Gangs de Rue,” would motivate the child welfare agency to set up a special research and clinical branch on gangs in 1999, called the “Groupe de Développement Clinique Gangs et Délinquance.” After completing the study for the Montreal police, the research team succeeded in obtaining a budget of close to a million dollars from the Quebec Ministry of Justice to implement and evaluate a model of community-based

prevention in Montreal. According to a member of the team, the child welfare agency had recently established a special research institute in the 1990s, the “Institut universitaire,” and was anxious to build up its funding base. The subject of street gangs was an area in which the department saw an opportunity to develop a “niche.”

Under the policy, the child welfare department received a substantial amount of funding for research and clinical services. One official reported, “*we worked on disaffiliation with the Centre Jeunesse de Montréal. We put a lot of money into that.*” A budget of \$18 million dollars was granted by the federal *National Crime Prevention Centre* for the child welfare to implement and evaluate a city-wide project aimed at rehabilitating young offenders, a project known as “Projet de Suivi Intensif” (PSI). The PSI was based on a tight collaboration between child welfare, police officers, and prosecutors. The project was implemented in two neighborhoods of Montreal with significant proportions of black families, including the site for the study. Though several black community organizations were active in the neighborhood, not one appears to have been recruited to participate in the PSI project. Instead, the same well-connected “street outreach” organization was centrally involved in the project.

According to respondents from the Ministry of Public Security, the child welfare agency was a natural partner, because the two agencies had been working closely together before 2005. In one interview, an official from the Ministry described the child welfare agency as having been very active both in the policy process and in positioning itself as an expert on gangs in Quebec. S/he indicated: “*They [the child welfare agency] were partners on every table imaginable in which the topic was street gangs, to share their expertise, but also to gather input from the field. They were very, very engaged. They succeeded in receiving funding from the federal government. I don’t remember how much, but I think it not far from \$7 million dollars over five years. It was*

called the “PSI Montréal gangs de rue,” the “Programme de Suivi Intensif Montréal.” If there had not been a plan would they have been able to obtain this funding? I am not sure. When the federal government decides to finance a project, it is reassured when it sees that it reflects a governmental priority. It is likely to respond by saying you’re not investing in the right place.”

One last aspect of *Street Gang Intervention* that bore the imprint of organizational interests was the decision to finance activities against sexual exploitation. One respondent from the Ministry reported that the inclusion of sexual trafficking in the policy came as a last-minute request from elected officials. Here is how the respondent recalled the experience: *“the plan was about to be launched, and then at the last minute we had the instruction to add a component on sexual exploitation...we did it. It was fast. It is often the case that at the last minute something like this happens. I remember how it went. Scorpion happened in 2002 and the convictions took place in 2004.”* Another official from the Ministry of Public Security described the decision to add sexual exploitation literally as an “order.” S/he recounted the following: *“I believe there were organizations that were very close to authorities in the Ministry of Public Security. Therefore, the order came and there was no question of doing a needs assessment, or evaluating the pertinence. We were doing a program on sexual exploitation. That was the order.”*

Conclusions

Similar to the chapter on Ontario’s policy process, the present chapter has sought both to describe and interpret the origins of the policy change in Quebec in 2005. In addition, it has analyzed the factors that drove the Quebec government to embrace a disciplinary approach to the urban violence, in contradiction with its history of progressive social policy. The chapter has

argued that the policy against street gangs grew out of a historical convergence between exogenous events, political institutions, and organizational interests. In contrast with Ontario, the episodes of violence did not get pulled into a bi-partisan debate, wherein spokespersons from the left and right of the political spectrum advocated for contrasting types of solutions. Rather, media coverage of the violence in Montreal was more one-sided and did much to propagate the police's perspective of an escalating problem of street gangs in Montreal led by young disadvantaged men of color, mostly black males. While a certain degree of unrest and instability was occurring in low-income and immigrant neighborhoods, the extent of juvenile delinquency and gang behavior was exaggerated, as crime statistics from the period reveal and as government officials themselves admitted in interviews. The moral panic over gang violence and crime grew in intensity between 2000 and 2005. During that time, the police chiefs' association was actively trying to persuade the government to approve a provincial strategy against street gangs, modeled on the same scheme developed to end a violent conflict between biker gangs in the 1990s. Only in the fall of 2005 when the Paris uprisings erupted and the federal government announced it was making a million-dollar budget available for the provinces to fight "youth gangs," did the Prime Minister finally endorse the proposal of police chiefs. Thus, the policy shift in 2005 was the outcome of the lobbying by police chiefs, the electoral incentives of the Liberal government, high-profile focusing events and a moral panic over supposed deviant black youth.

In the policy process that unfolded between 2005 and 2006, the Ministry of Public Security and police chiefs' association remained in the driver's seat. Efforts to form an inter-ministerial coalition and mount a comprehensive response to street gangs largely failed. Social service ministries largely stayed out of the picture, possibly because of institutional barriers and disincentives, and what some may have perceived as a disjuncture between the aims of criminal

justice policy and social provision. Within a few short years, the social service ministries completely withdrew from the inter-ministerial committee. Only the organizations with already established policies on youth gangs and a financial and organizational stake in the policy—law enforcement, criminal justice, and youth detention—participated fully and voluntarily in the decision-making. As a result, the policy was strong on enforcement, detention, and clinical intervention, yet weak on prevention. On prevention, the government’s preferred strategy was to finance “street work” in low-income neighborhoods. The Ministry of Public Security defended this approach by relying on empirical research, yet, it is also peculiar that it was a strategy advocated by one of the Ministry’s closest non-profit allies, an NGO engaged in “street work” in Montreal. Black community organizations were surprisingly under-represented throughout the policy process for Phase 1 and 2 of the *Street Gang Intervention*, and for reasons that remain to be determined.

The composition of the institutions and organizations that came together in 2005 to shape the policy process explains why the policy placed the priority first on enforcement, followed by detention and rehabilitation. The chapter has also described how the policy process in Quebec was centralized and highly state-centered, with only one well-connected NGOs invited to the table. During 2005, there was little or no black political mobilization around the urban violence. At the time, black community organizations in Montreal were likely busy meeting the urgent needs of black families and youth in low-income neighborhoods; unlike Toronto, however, black youth in Montreal did not have their advocates in the halls of power, so to speak.

Chapter 5: Racial Politics and Public Policy in Quebec and Ontario

The present chapter engages in a more theoretical exploration of the study's finding and places in contrast the impact of historical institutionalism, constructivism, social movements, and interest groups on the contradictions in the policy trajectories of Quebec and Ontario in 2006. Chapters Three and Four showed that the causal diagnosis and proposed solutions to the urban violence were dramatically different across the two provinces, despite the seeming similarities in the symptoms of the crisis. In Quebec, the gun violence was blamed on the actions of criminal bands of black youth in Montreal who were said to be posing a grave threat to public security and liable to grow if left unchecked. The solution was then to arrest offenders and stop would-be gang members from getting into the fray by deploying the police, strengthening youth detention, and promoting gang prevention. In Ontario, two separate branches of the state came up with two contrasting types of solutions. The Toronto police launched an anti-gang enforcement squad in low-income neighborhoods, similar to Quebec. In addition, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) drew up a long-term strategy that sought to make up for the neo-liberal cuts to social provision imposed by the previous Conservative administration and connect young people in low-income neighborhoods to jobs, internships, after-school programs, and adult mentors and counsellors. In totality, Quebec's approach to the urban violence was more singularly disciplinary and racially stigmatizing than in Ontario, where policy-makers in the MCYS sought to create a youth policy that was overtly inclusive and non-stigmatizing.

The present chapter wrestles with the contradictions in the provincial policies by examining them within the context of local political institutions, ideas, social movements and policy networks. In doing so, it shows that the policy variations are not as unusual as they first

appeared, and bear a certain continuity with the history of race policy and politics in the province. As the chapter will reveal, the very forces that brought into being Quebec's progressive welfare state—i.e., minority nationalism, corporatism, and centralization—have posed barriers to race-conscious policies and the political mobilization of black constituencies in Montreal. In Ontario, a long history of multi-racial movement-building and black political mobilization has sustained an active political debate on racial and economic justice in Toronto, brought to light the limits of multiculturalism policy, and established anti-racism as an acceptable framework for municipal and provincial policy. In both provinces, the policies of 2006 were the outcome of historical and path-dependent processes, namely political institutions and policy legacies. In addition, the two policies bore the imprint of emerging new ideas about social policy in Canada in which the social rights of citizenship are being replaced with strategies of social investment and public security (Bernard 2016; Brodie 2009; Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003).

In Chapters Three and Four, the dissertation described the differing stages of the policy-making process as they unfolded within each province between 2005 and 2006. The present chapter explains why the process moved in such opposing directions across the two provinces. The table below provides a graphic illustration of the multiple factors that contributed to the policy divergence and are elaborated in the present chapter. As shown, the provinces stood at odds with each other on nearly every dimension. For example, the conceptual frame for the policy process in Quebec was color-blind, whereas in Ontario it was race-conscious. In Quebec, the policy-making process was centralized, while in Ontario it was decentralized. Finally, the coalition of policy actors in Quebec was comprised solely of state agencies, led and governed by the Ministry of Public Security. In Ontario, a broader, looser, and more diverse coalition of

actors, including an important contingent of black community organizations and black Liberal politicians, played direct and indirect roles in the policy-making process between 2005 and 2006.

Table 2: Variations in the Policy Process Across Quebec and Ontario

| <i>Explanatory Variables</i> | <i>Quebec</i> | <i>Ontario</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <i>Social Constructions</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Color-blind - Police enforcement, with some prevention. - Embraced concept of “street gangs” proposed by the police. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Race-conscious - Prevention and “youth development” - Left- and right-wing perspectives on the urban violence competed with each other. |
| <i>Political Institutions</i> | Coercive institutions of the state (police, prisons, child welfare) | Ministry of Children and Youth Services |
| <i>Actors and Coalitions</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State-controlled and centralized, with little input from non-state actors. - No black political mobilization. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decentralized and conceived with input from philanthropies and community organizations. - Lobbying by black Liberal politicians and black grassroots coalitions. |

The sections that follow begin with a discussion of the relevant political institutions and ideas in Quebec that drove the policy process in the direction of an action plan against street gangs in 2006, with a particular focus on minority nationalism, centralization, and corporatism. The second part of the chapter shifts the attention onto Ontario and analyzes the combined effects of multiculturalism and anti-racism, decentralization in policy-making, and black political mobilization on the course of policy-making in that province between 2005 and 2006.

Political Institutions and Ideas in Quebec

Sub-State Nationalism

Quebec's Francophone nationalist movement has no parallel in the rest of Canada and constitutes a major driving force in provincial politics, shaping everything from political ideologies, policies, institutions, and social movements. On any given issue of policy, one cannot disentangle the aims of sub-state nationalism and nation-building in Quebec from the precise content of policy (Barker 2010; Béland and Lecours 2001). This applies just as well to social policy as it does to race policy, though in ways that are unique. On social policy, the nationalist movement has been regarded largely as a progressive, left-wing force. From its inception in the late 1960s, Québécois nationalism was founded on a belief in a strong state, as a way both to preserve the French minority language in Canada and to raise the socio-economic status of Francophones, who had been oppressed for generations by the conservative Catholic church and Anglophone elites (Béland and Lecours 2008). The welfare state's largest period of growth in Quebec in the 1990s was spearheaded by the nationalist Parti Québécois and the cross-class

coalition it forged with business, unions, and social movements to devise the most ambitious package of social policies in the province's history, thereby establishing Quebec's reputation as the most progressive province in the country. Though scholars seem to disagree on the relative importance to ascribe to Québécois nationalism as a driving force in the 1996 left-ward turn in social policy (Noël 2013; Béland and Lecours 2008), it may be reasonable to suggest that it acted as the glue that held the disparate coalition of actors together, many who were not used to cooperating together and who had divergent ideological and political orientations.

When the attention turns onto race policy, Québécois nationalism has frequently operated as a more conservative (certainly restricting) than progressive force. When questions of racial and ethnic diversity rise to the fore, debates become dominated by a politics of "us and them" rather than solidarity. In political discourse, the main fault line is drawn between the province's white Francophone majority and immigrants and racial minorities. Very often, the two groups are portrayed as if they comprised opposing and monolithic blocs (Labelle 2015). In one recent illustration of this phenomenon, the Liberal government announced in the fall of 2017 that it was cancelling a government inquiry into racial discrimination, because, it argued, the process would only amount to a "trial" on Quebecers ("un procès sur les Québécois" in French). Only a week earlier, the Liberal party lost an election in a riding outside of Montreal and local party activists alleged that publicity about the inquiry on racial discrimination had alienated white Francophones who feared it would become a platform for minority groups to brand them as racist. The inquiry was then taken completely off the policy agenda, a year after the government had had to be prodded and persuaded by a multi-racial coalition of activists and civil rights organizations to approve it. The Liberal government's resistance (or outright refusal) to act on racial discrimination would seem to be consistent with a longer-term trend in Quebec in which

issues of racial inequality and racism are either kept off the political agenda, silenced, and dismissed, or handled quietly behind closed doors in the form of ad-hoc, temporary, and group-specific projects. Scholars who have studied Quebec's record of policy on racial diversity and immigration describe it as ambivalent, reticent, fragmented, "ethnicized," and culturalist (Jacob 2002; Leroux 2012; Potvin 2008; Salée 2007; Symons 2002).

Though scholarly analysis linking minority nationalism and race policy in Quebec remains scant, the present chapter contends that it constitutes the main ideological and political framework within which issues of racial inequality and racism are debated, sorted out, and managed. In general, the historical record shows that minority nationalism has generated more obstacles than opportunities for race-conscious policy in Quebec. The chapter makes two claims that are elaborated in the following pages. First, it proposes that minority nationalism in Quebec constructs language and culture as the major axes of the province's collective identity and political struggle; as a result, issues of race are supplanted by (and reduced to) debates over culture and ethnicity, leaving questions of racial inequality and racism aside. The resurgence of a conservative nationalism in Quebec in recent years has intensified the resonance of cultural conflicts in the province and further reinforced the symbolic divide between a seemingly homogeneous group of white Francophones and racial and ethnic minorities, who may be immigrant or native-born. A second profound and under-studied consequence of minority nationalism in Quebec is the effect it has had in inhibiting and constraining political mobilization around race.

Racial income inequality is perhaps the most glaring and persistent blind-spot in Quebec policy. To date, the provincial government has enacted policies to address immigrant integration, cultural diversity, employment equity, and racial discrimination in public sector employment, yet

nothing explicit to address racial inequalities in income, poverty, and social mobility (Bosset 2005; Eid and Labelle 2013; Garon 2015; Marhraoui 2005; Potvin 2008, 2010; Lendaro and Goyette 2013). Even the province's highly-lauded policy against poverty remains color-blind, as it refers to racial and immigrant disparities in poverty only in passing and does not link these observations to any corresponding actions. As scholars have remarked before, public ideas and discourses provide policy-makers with moral and cognitive maps to sort through and resolve complex social problems (Bleich 2003; Bloemraad 2005). On the subject of racial inequality in Quebec, no coherent set of guidelines has ever been made explicit or public.

The inclination to overlook racial inequality and racism and turn instead to culture as a proxy for race was evident in the policy on street gangs. As indicated in Chapter Four, the policy document states that certain "cultural communities" in Montreal are more susceptible than others to street gangs, and yet it remains virtually silent on racism and racial inequality. Well over two decades ago, Jacob (1992) summed up the state of institutional practice on racial and ethnic diversity in Quebec by describing it as "culturalist." The same conclusion could be drawn today. Indeed, cultural notions of belonging and citizenship have only loomed larger in recent years, due to the revival of a conservative strain of nationalism in Quebec. The following pages discuss how the culturalist bias in Quebec race policy is manifested in public discourses about the province's collective identity and in the government's stress on policies of diversity management.

Debates about Quebec's collective identity have continually swerved between a civic form of nationalism, in which belonging is defined by territorial residence and citizenship, and a conservative nationalism that hinges on culture, ethnicity, and colonial ancestry. Throughout much of the post-1960s period, the Quebec state has sought to instill an inclusive form of civic

nationalism, yet this has not stopped certain sectors of the intelligentsia and political elite from openly defending a more ethnically and racially exclusive view of the province's collective identity. Race (or whiteness) has always been, and remains, the silent and ever-present marker of the Québécois identity as French-speaking and Euro-descended. Traditionally, the boundary-making process revolved mainly around the French language, Catholicism, and descent from French colonial settlers. In recent years, new cultural symbols have been added, namely "laïcité" (secularism) and gender equality, in direct response to growing fears about the impact of immigration and cultural diversity on the survival of the Francophone majority culture. Various scholars have pointed out that the new cultural tropes of laïcité and gender equity are really code words for race, because they are only ever mounted opposition to immigrants from non-western and Islamic countries, whose values are made to appear as if they were in fundamental conflict with the norms of Quebec society (Bilge 2011; Leroux 2010). There are multiple problems with the homogeneous view of Quebec's historical identity, not least of which is its exclusion of First Nations as the original peoples of the province, and the erasure of racial and ethnic groups who have long been a part of the province's social fabric, including the early waves of immigrants from Europe, the Caribbean, Middle East, and Asia. What this discourse does, however, is maintain a seemingly neat, symbolic dichotomy between two major groupings in the society: white Francophones, who constitute the majority, and a multifarious group of "others," who may be Anglophone, people of color, or immigrants (Labelle 2015; Potvin 2008). Two opposing visions of Quebec's collective identity, one civic and one ethnic, continue to compete with each other in political debate and popular discourse (Dupré 2012; Iacovino 2015; Lecours 2000; MacClure 2004). These enduring tensions, real or perceived, between cultural pluralism and Quebec's Francophone identity might partly explain why the state has been reluctant to give due

attention to racial inequality and racism as fundamental facts of Quebec society, rather than as marginal problems.

The rebirth of conservative nationalism in Quebec in the last couple of decades has heightened the salience of cultural and racial conflicts in the public arena and further reinforced the perceived schism between white Francophones on one side, and racial minorities and immigrants on the other (Labelle 2015). For a relatively brief period, the nationalist Parti Québécois had engaged in a determined effort to do away with ethnic nationalism after its party leader, Jacques Parizeau, was roundly condemned of racism when he blamed the loss of the referendum vote on sovereignty in 1995 on “money and the ethnic vote.” From that point on, the Parti Québécois firmly endorsed a civic form of nationalism; yet, it did not take long before ethnic nationalist sentiments would explode again on the political scene, starting in 2003 with the arrival of an anti-immigrant nationalist party, the Action Démocratique. The surge in ethnic nationalism was also sparked by a well-publicized controversy over “reasonable accommodation,” that started to build in the early 2000s and reached a high point during 2006 and 2008 (Potvin 2010). The furor over “reasonable accommodation” erupted after the media published a handful of cases in which racial and ethnic minorities in Montreal had requested special religious accommodations from public and private institutions. In one case, a male student had asked his school in 2001 for permission to wear a kirpan, which was rejected by the school’s governing board and eventually examined by the Supreme Court of Canada, which ruled in favor of the student (Sarrouh and Banting 2017). Other cases involved the Quebec Soccer Federation (QSF) refusing to grant young soccer players the right to wear Muslim hijabs and Sikh turbans during games, even though the Canadian Soccer Federation (CSA) had ruled that players could wear religious headgear as long as they met safety criteria (Sarrouh and

Banting 2017). The controversy over reasonable accommodation dominated the news headlines for months and the media coverage was frequently complicit in stoking racial hostility (Potvin 2010). The government would quiet the dispute by launching a government commission to look into the issue and come up with recommendations.

When the controversy over reasonable accommodation broke out, the leader of the Action Démocratique, the young and charismatic Mario Dumont, criticized what he said were the excesses of “political correctness” and defended the right of white Francophones to protect their cultural heritage. In his own words, Dumont implored white Francophones to “drop political correctness and fervently and unequivocally protect their European heritage” (Bilge 2013). Though the Action Démocratique was unexpectedly dissolved a few years after the 2007 elections, other conservative nationalists have continued to be outspoken public figures, including several academics, journalists, and high-profile authors (Belkhodja 2008). During its heyday, the Action Démocratique drew a significant wedge in the established balance of power between the two other major parties and would drive both the Liberals and Parti Québécois to shift their positions on immigration in an apparent attempt to capture the votes seized by Dumont’s party. The Liberal party abruptly ended the recent shift in immigration policy of speaking of immigrants in terms of citizenship and turned back to a language of culture and ethnicity. In 2004, the Liberal government changed the name of the Ministry responsible for immigration, which went from being called the “Ministry of Relations with Citizens and Immigration” to the “Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities.” The Parti Québécois reacted by electing a leader in 2007 who had long been a prominent member of the party’s ethnic nationalist wing, Pauline Marois. Marois embodied the left-right contradictions within the party: she was a self-professed social democrat, but also a conservative nationalist.

Under the Liberal government of Jean Charest between 2004 to 2012, the state responded to the heightened conflicts over diversity and immigration by engaging in a balancing act; on the one hand, it capitulated to ethnic nationalism by enforcing new cultural codes in immigration policy; on the other hand, it devoted some increased resources to addressing racial discrimination and facilitating the settlement and integration of immigrants (Garot 2015). One of the first signs of a swing to cultural nationalism in immigration policy came in 2004, when the then Liberal government introduced a new cultural contract for immigrants. From that point on, immigrants receiving citizenship in Canada were obliged to sign a non-binding agreement in which they vow to protect the basic values of Quebec society, namely secularism, gender equity, democracy, and the French language. Salée (2007) described the new cultural contract as a sign of the “re-ethnicization” of immigration policy, because it represented a move away from the civic nationalism espoused by the government after the 1995 referendum. These Liberal party reforms to immigration would go largely unnoticed until 2012, when Pauline Marois of the Parti Québécois proposed a more far-reaching set of rules aimed at immigrants, known popularly at the Charter of Values bill, which sought among other things to ban the wearing of religious symbols in public offices such as, the hijab, kirpan, Jewish skull cap, and Christian cross (Bakali 2015). The bill sparked a heated public outcry and was soon shelved. In the aftermath of the scandal, the Parti Québécois held by-elections in 2014 in which Marois and the party were roundly and unexpectedly voted out of the office. Once the Liberal party took over, it succeeded in passing a bill not unlike the Charter of Values, yet less sweeping, that bars women from wearing the niqab or burka while working in or receiving public services (Hamilton 2017). For reasons that remain unclear, the bill was quickly approved and with little public notice. The actions of the Liberals and Parti Québécois indicate that both major parties have tried to appeal

to voters who were attracted to the Action Démocratique's conservative rhetoric. It is also worth noting that Quebec has not been alone in turning back to cultural nationalism in immigration policy, as new citizenship contracts for immigrants have become common around the west, including at the federal level in Canada and in France and Britain (Lasalle 2011). Whether these immigration reforms are permanent or transient remains to be seen. It is likely, however, that concerns about the preservation of the French language and culture in Quebec will continue to overshadow policy-making on immigration and racial diversity in the foreseeable future.

Another way in which the cultural perspective on race is maintained in Quebec policy is through the emphasis on diversity management as opposed to equity and anti-discrimination (Eid and Labelle 2013; Salée 2007). In 2004, the government announced it was launching a consultation to develop an anti-racism policy, after the federal government had enacted its own policy a year before. However, the effort was quickly abandoned once the controversy over reasonable accommodation erupted (Potvin 2010). When the authors of the commission on reasonable accommodation submitted their report in 2008, the government released a new policy on diversity and immigration in which it outlined actions to address racial discrimination. According to one observer, the new policy was a step forward, because it was the first time the government spoke of the need for anti-racism initiatives (Potvin 2010). More recent assessments of Quebec policy maintain that anti-racism remains a weak spot and that the bulk of the government's attention goes towards diversity management (Eid and Labelle 2013).

The major platform for Quebec's diversity management policies is what is called "inter-culturalism." Quebec came up with inter-culturalism in direct response to the federal government's introduction of a multiculturalism policy in 1971. The belief at the time, and still today, was that federal multiculturalism did not give due attention to the "French fact" in Quebec

and would place Quebec's Francophone majority on the same plane as other racial and ethnic minorities in the country (Nugent 2005). Not only was multiculturalism thought to be unsuitable for Quebec, but the prevailing view was that multiculturalism was likely to foster disintegration and cultural isolation, rather than cohesion. The premise at the heart of inter-culturalism is that the French language and culture in Quebec ought to be the hub around which all groups in the society converge (Banting and Soroka 2012). One oft-cited synonym for inter-culturalism is "cultural convergence," as a process in which citizens rally behind and actively participate in, and contribute to, a common culture. According to the ideal of inter-culturalism, the culture of the receiving society is constantly evolving and being transformed anew by the arrival of newcomers. As commentators have noted, however, there are significant gaps between the rhetoric of inter-culturalism and its actual practice (Labelle 2015; Salée 2007). Like multiculturalism in Canada, inter-culturalism in Quebec has been critiqued for paying disproportionate attention to cultural dialogue and integration at the expense of structural problems of racial inequality and racism. In practice, inter-culturalism in Quebec has also been tilted more towards getting immigrants to adapt to Francophone society, rather than facilitating an equitable exchange of views and experiences between the majority group and racial and ethnic minorities. Salée (2007) concludes that the form inter-culturalism has taken in Quebec actually maintains the supremacy of the French language and culture, because it does not challenge the political and socio-economic disparities that keep Francophones in a dominant position and prevent racial and ethnic minorities from participating equally in the society.

A concrete example of the ways in which inter-culturalism may, unintentionally or not, keep racial and ethnic minorities in a subordinate position relative to the Francophone majority is a ruling the Parti Québécois issued in 1989, barring ethno- and race-specific community

organizations from continuing to receive state funds unless they geared their services to a multi-cultural clientele. The argument was that the existence of ethno- and race-specific organizations was contrary to inter-culturalism, because it allowed groups to remain in silos rather than participate in a common culture. Though no systematic data have been collected on the impact of the funding ban, anecdotal evidence suggests it had immediate and long-lasting effects and likely weakened the organizational bases that various racial and ethnic groups and immigrants in Montreal had formed and come to depend on. The ban may also have had the effect of depriving racial and ethnic minorities not only of the resources, but also legitimacy to organize collectively and defend their unique interests. Over time, the number of black community organizations in Montreal has steadily and dramatically fallen, from a few dozen in the 1990s to less than a dozen today. The few black-run organizations in Montreal that survive to this day operate services for a racially and culturally diverse population. A report by a federation of immigrant organizations in Montreal indicates that immediately after the Parti Québécois introduced the ban, ethno- and culturally-specific organizations completely altered their names and identities such as, the *Latin American Center of Montreal* (Centre Latino-Américain de Montréal) which became the *Center for Liaison and Multi-Ethnic Assistance* (Carrefour de Liaison et d'Aide Multi-Ethnique), and the Portuguese Center, which turned into the *Center for Social-Community Action in Montreal* (Centre d'action sociocommunautaire de Montréal) (TRCI, 2016).

Proponents of inter-culturalism in Quebec like to argue that the approach is preferable to multiculturalism because it encourages citizens to participate in a common culture, whereas multiculturalism fosters cultural fragmentation and isolation. Such claims have so far not been borne out by reality; indeed, the evidence shows that racial minorities in Quebec feel a weaker sense of belonging to the province than their counterparts in the rest of Canada. Banting and

Soroka (2012) report that second-generation racial minorities in Quebec express significantly less attachment to the province than their peers in other Canadian provinces. For first-generation racial minorities, attachment to Quebec is slightly lower than in other provinces. For years, it has been known that racial and ethnic minorities in Quebec identify more strongly with Canada than they do with Quebec, a pattern that appears to hold to this day (Magnan, Darchinian, and Larouche 2017). In addition, research has shown that white Francophones in Quebec are more apprehensive and feel less positively towards racial and religious minorities than whites in the rest of the country, although they express similar levels of support for or opposition to increases in immigration (Bilodeau, Turgeon and Karakoç 2012; Turgeon and Bilodeau, 2014). In one study, Bilodeau et al. (2012) found that on a scale of 100, with 100 being the most positive feelings towards racial minorities and 0 the lowest, the mean score for Francophone whites in Quebec was 60%, versus 73% for Anglophone whites in the province. In Ontario, the mean score for whites was 69%. The record of inter-culturalism in Quebec indicates that it has not proven so far to be superior to multiculturalism in fostering feelings of inclusion among racial minorities and immigrants. One likely cause of the weaknesses of inter-culturalism would appear to be minority nationalism and the constant tug of war between civic and ethnic nationalism, which only further alienate racial and ethnic minorities in the province.

The preceding paragraphs have suggested that the contradictions between pluralism and minority nationalism in Quebec remain at the heart of the struggles over immigration and race policy in the province. According to scholars of sub-state nationalism in Quebec, these tensions are likely to persist for some time to come and for reasons that are both structural and cultural (Gagnon and Iacovino 2007). To borrow a concept from Jeram, Van Der Zwet and Wisthaler (2016), sub-state nations like Quebec, Scotland, and Catalonia face a fundamental “legitimation

paradox.” To assert their right to political autonomy, sub-state nations may seek to defend their right to preserve a minority ethnic identity within the larger nation-state, yet, to retain legitimacy as a sub-state government and on the world stage, political elites must also show a commitment to individual rights and pluralism. Sub-state nations may resolve this paradox either by openly embracing multiculturalism or by setting stricter limits and obligations on immigrants. In general, states in this predicament have typically incorporated elements of an inclusive and exclusive nationalism into their policies on immigration and diversity (Jeram et al. 2016). Gagnon and Iacovino (2007) assert that the structural dilemmas of minority nationalism in Quebec are further compounded by the refusal of the Canadian federal government to grant any special constitutional status to Quebec. As long as the Quebec state remains in a precarious status, they argue, it will continue to be veer between ethnic and civic nationalism.

It is also important to note that ethnic and racial divisions in Quebec may often be exaggerated, but they are also real. As public opinion surveys show, feelings of cultural insecurity remain high among white Francophones and strongly influence attitudes towards immigration and diversity (Bilodeau et al. 2012; Turgeon and Bilodeau 2014). Popular anxieties about immigration in Quebec grabbed national attention in 2007 when the town of Hérouxville, a small agricultural village in the north of the province with only 1300 inhabitants, enacted a xenophobic “Code of Conduct” for immigrants. Even though the town had no known immigrants, the City Council came up with a set of regulations that were clearly targeted at Muslim and non-western immigrants. The Code included prohibitions on stoning, burning women with acid, face coverings, ceremonial daggers in school, female genital cutting, and gender-segregated swimming facilities (Mookerjee 2009). The City came up with the Code in the midst of the furor over reasonable accommodation in 2006 and 2007. Another town in Quebec,

the City of Gatineau, would go onto to introduce a similarly racially inflammatory code of conduct in 2011, even after the Hérouxville Council had been widely condemned for its actions (Stasiulis, 2013).

For the time being, policies on racial inequality in Quebec seem to be stuck at an impasse. Compared with Ontario, where diversity is understood as an integral feature of the society, in Quebec, the public debates seem to be trapped between two poles: one accepting of diversity and the other wary of its impact. As long as these political tensions persist and racial diversity continues to be seen as external to (rather than constitutive of) Quebec's Francophone identity, progress on race equity policy will likely remain slow, timid, and fragmented.

Corporatism

Comparative studies have shown that coalition-building is often the key to any successful effort at changing public policy, especially when it mobilizes groups of actors who work from within and outside the state to sway political opinion and build the case for reform (Lieberman, 2002). In Quebec, the dramatic turn to social democratic policies in 1996 was the outcome of a historic alliance between the Parti Québécois and the women's movement and anti-poverty coalitions in the province (Jenson 1998; Noël 2013). For years, the Parti Québécois had collaborated with business and unions in setting economic policy, yet social movements remained outside of these corporatist networks. In 1996, the Parti Québécois invited women's organizations and anti-poverty coalitions to join the national summit along with unions and business associations, after these groups had staged a massive protest against poverty in Quebec City in 1995, called the "March for Bread and Roses" (Jenson 1998). From that point on, the

non-profit sector would become a formal and integral partner of the state and would be given official recognition in institutional bodies such as the *Secrétariat à l'Action Communautaire Autonome* (SACA). Studies comparing Quebec and Ontario have concluded that the system of corporatism partly explains the province's greater support for progressive social policies (Haddow 2015). This is not to deny the independent influence of provincial social movements; their success in entering into formal relations with the state came about as a result of the power base they built on the back of well-coordinated grassroots campaigns (Noël 2003; Dufour 2004).

One aspect of the cooperation between the state and civil society in Quebec that gets overlooked is the significant under-representation of immigrants and racial and ethnic minorities. Organizations representing racial and ethnic minorities seem to be absent from the provincial anti-poverty coalitions. There is one well-known federation of immigrant organizations that is part of these networks and involved in negotiations with the state, the "Table the Concertation des Organismes aux Services des Réfugiés et Immigrants" (translation in English, *Roundtable of Organizations Serving Refugees and Immigrants*). The TRCI has been one of the few organizations to be outspoken on issues of racial inequality and racism, yet, its mandate remains focused on immigrants and not native-born racial minorities. The under-representation of racial and ethnic minorities in provincial coalitions and structures of interest representation may partly explain why black political actors and organizations were not present for the meetings and deliberations on the *Street Gang Intervention*. As Chapter Four showed, only one well-placed NGO with an already established relationship with the Montreal police was ever consulted about the issue of street gangs and invited to any meetings. At the time, no known black community coalition was either active or able to advocate politically on behalf of black youth in Montreal.

The reasons for the under-representation of racial and ethnic minorities in state-civil society relations remain largely unknown, because the issue has never been empirically investigated. One observation that can be made from the literature is that the Parti Québécois sought the cooperation of women's organizations and anti-poverty coalitions in the historic 1996 summit by appealing to a politics of class solidarity (Noël 2013; Gagnon and Lachapelle 1996). Neither one of these groups was used to cooperating closely with the state prior to 1996, and the Parti Québécois persuaded them to come on board by claiming it shared their commitment to a caring and equitable society (Gagnon and Lachapelle 1996). The Parti Québécois was able to strike a kind of class compromise between business and civil society, by getting the anti-poverty coalitions to agree to deficit control, in return for legislation on universal day care, the social economy, parental leave, and subsidies for low-income parents. Hence, the left-wing alliance that brought about the explosive growth in the welfare state in Quebec in 1996 placed class and gender stratification in the center of the analysis, yet ignored racial inequality. Still today, social movements in Quebec tend to operate with a nationalist and class-conscious framework that overlooks racial inequality. This is visible, for example, in the mainstream women's movement, which has frequently been accused of taking pro-nationalist positions that infringe on the rights of immigrant and racial minority women. Several prominent Francophone feminists declared their support for the controversial Charter of Values bill in 2012, which was denounced by women of color who argued it would only further stigmatize Muslim women who wear the veil (Dobrowolsky 2017). In another case, the Council on the Status of Women, a provincial body, opposed a bill introduced by the Liberal government in 2009 that would have required public institutions to implement standards and practices of "diversity management." The Council submitted an amendment to the bill and insisted that any diversity policy had to affirm the

inviolability of certain basic values, namely secularism, gender equity, and the promotion of French (Potvin 2008). The bill never succeeded in getting passed and was abandoned.

Political Mobilization and Representation

Generally speaking, levels of political mobilization among black communities in Montreal are low, especially when compared to Toronto. The same can be said of other racial and ethnic minorities in Toronto, such as South Asian and Chinese communities, who are considerably larger and more politically organized at the grassroots in Toronto than Montreal (Siemiatycki et al. 2003). The political representation of blacks and other racial minorities in the municipal and provincial governments in Quebec is also low (Black 2011; Simard 2002). The only black politician to ever have held a seat in Cabinet in Quebec was Yolande James, who ran for the Liberal party in the 2003 election and was appointed *Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities* in 2004. A few years later she was also appointed Family Minister, a position she held until her retirement from politics in 2014. It is no coincidence that Yolande James ran for and was elected as a candidate for the Liberal party, because the party has historically attracted more support from racial and ethnic minorities than the Parti Québécois (Salée 2007). Research has long shown that racial and ethnic minorities identify more with the Liberal party than they do the Parti Québécois, and this division has only been exacerbated by moments in which Parti Québécois politicians have been heard making racist and xenophobic remarks (Potvin 2008). On the whole, racial and ethnic minorities in Quebec tend to view themselves first as Canadians, and only secondly as Quebecers, whereas white Francophones express a primary attachment to Quebec (Bilodeau et al. 2012; Salée 2007).

Centralization

Another factor that may account for the absence of black political actors in deliberations on the policy on street gangs is the centralization of policy-making in Quebec, which can be traced back to sub-state nationalism. When social movements and policy coalitions seek to influence policy in Quebec, they turn their attention towards the provincial government in Quebec City, which represents, both symbolically and in practice, the “national state” (Laforest 2005). Unlike other Canadian provinces, the provincial state in Quebec, not the federal government, is viewed as the seat of political power and the expression of the population’s collective identity and aspirations. In a comparative study of Quebec and Ontario, Mahon (2013) finds that the grassroots campaign for day care was ultimately more successful in Quebec because it concentrated all of the pressure on the provincial government, whereas in Ontario, the campaign sought to lobby the three levels of government: federal, provincial and municipal. In general, social movements in Ontario tend to set their eyes on changing federal policy first, in the hope that it will trickle down to the provinces. However, this left the movement for day care in Ontario with a much higher and harder goal to attain than if it had sought only to influence provincial policy. In the end, the provincial state in Ontario did take the initiative to introduce a form of subsidized day care, in spite of the lack of federal policy. The question remains whether the superior importance of the provincial state in Quebec is more beneficial for some causes than others. As indicated above, the provincial NGO coalitions and structures of state-society relations in Quebec currently under-represent racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants.

The centralization of policy-making on the street gang policy and the lack of black political representation may also be a function of the institution that was put in charge, the

Ministry of Public Security, which tends to be a more secretive agency than most and one that prefers to rely on its own internal expertise and intelligence-gathering methods to form policy, rather than seeking public input. It is also true that black communities in Montreal have had a historically fraught relationship with the Montreal police and would likely have raised objections to a policy that intended to increase the already high level of police surveillance of black youth. It is not impossible to imagine that the Montreal police purposely avoided approaching the black community, because it would almost certainly have raised concerns about the policy. As indicated in Chapter Four, black-run organizations were not present for the public conferences the Montreal police organized on the subject of street gangs during the 1990s and early 2000s, even though black youth were the ostensible face of the “gang” problem in those years.

Political Institutions and Ideas in Ontario

Multiculturalism and Race Relations

In stark contrast with Quebec, political battles over racism and racial inequality have been front and center for decades in Ontario, and especially in Toronto, where a multi-racial movement for social justice has been active for years and expanding continually since the 1970s. Black organizations and politicians in Toronto have been among the early and leading proponents of the fight for racial justice, yet, they have never performed this role alone and have always labored alongside or in collaboration with a variety of other concerned groups and communities. South Asian immigrant organizations, for example, were among the early campaigners for the fight against hate crimes in Toronto and racial discrimination in the police force and education system, as were independent Jewish organizations and white progressives

attached to local public and philanthropic institutions (Stasiulis 1989; Siemiatycki et al. 2003). As early as 1975, a collective of individuals and organizations established the Urban Alliance for Race Relations, an independent think tank and lobbying group now in its 43rd year. As time progressed, many other immigrant, indigenous, and racial and ethnic minority groups would join the multi-racial coalitions as well as set up their own advocacy organizations. Examples include the Canadian Hispanic Congress, the Canadian Tamil Congress, the Jamaican Canadian Association, the Canadian Arab Federation, the Chinese Canadian National Council, and the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (Siemiatycki 2011; Siemiatycki et al. 2011; Viswanathan 2010). Many of these agencies owe their existence to funds awarded to them or to their members by the multiculturalism policies of the federal and provincial government.

Though the story of coalition-building around racism and racial inequality in Toronto has yet to be told in full, the few publications on the subject indicate these movements have had profound short- and long-term repercussions on the policies of the Toronto municipality and Ontario government (Rees 2018; Siemiatycki et al. 2003; Viswanathan 2009). It is not an exaggeration to say that the innumerable government inquiries, policies, committees, and offices established on race equity and anti-racism over the years arose due to bottom-up pressures from multi-racial coalitions. One of the most well-known and influential government inquiries is the Stephen Lewis report (1992) on systemic racism in the criminal justice system, which the left-wing National Democratic Party launched immediately after the most dramatic and angry public protest in Toronto's history, sparked by the police shootings of two black men in Toronto and the acquittal of the officers in the Rodney King beating in Los Angeles (Lewinberg 1999). Between 1988 and the publication of the Lewis report in 1992, eight black men had been shot and killed by the Toronto police (Croucher 1997). In his report, Stephen Lewis, a former Canadian

ambassador to the United Nations, stated that “what we are dealing with, at root, and fundamentally, is anti-black racism...Just as the soothing balm of multiculturalism cannot mask racism, so racism cannot mask its primary target” (Croucher 1997).

Judging from the record of anti-racism activism in Toronto, it would seem that one of the major effects it has had on political discourse in Ontario is to push the discussion beyond multiculturalism and to force the state acknowledge the importance of racial inequalities in power, income, and opportunity. If one compares Toronto with Montreal, the movement has turned concepts like anti-racism and anti-black racism into everyday language and objects of policy to an extent that would be unheard of in Quebec. Within the last year, both the provincial government and municipality of Toronto adopted specific policies on anti-black racism. Though progress in race policy in Ontario has waxed and waned in tune with changing political circumstances, one can conclude that it has evolved through a constant feedback loop between the state and social movements in Toronto. Three distinct perspectives, emerging from below and above, seem to have interacted over time in determining the shape of race policy in Ontario: federal multiculturalism, the Anglo-American race relations model, and a militant anti-racism.

When the federal government enacted the multiculturalism policy in 1971, Ontario and other English-speaking provinces followed the lead. The federal 1971 Multicultural Act basically affirmed the centrality of cultural pluralism to the social, economic, and political order of the country. Since 1971, the policy has moved through several iterations and has never remained static. In its early phase, the Act sought primarily to promote the cultural integration of immigrants and racial and ethnic minorities. Funding went into supporting ethno-cultural organizations and language acquisition for recent immigrants. Starting in the 1980s, the focus shifted to problems of racial inequality and discrimination, as evidence began to mount of the

barriers to integration facing immigrants of color. The revised Multiculturalism Act of 1988 took these issues into account and focused more on countering racism in the public and institutional spheres. Later iterations of the policy would shift the attention onto social cohesion and cultural belonging, as a result of the rise of right-wing movements opposed to immigration and cultural diversity and the threat of independence in Quebec (McAndrew et al. 2008). In Ontario, a provincial multicultural policy was put into effect in 1982, with the installation of the *Ministry of Citizenship and Culture*, today known as the *Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration*. In principle, the Ministry is responsible for “recognizing the pluralistic nature of Ontario society, to stress the full participation of all Ontarians as equal members of the community, encouraging the sharing of cultural heritage while affirming those elements held in common by all citizens” (Brosseau and Dewing 2009).

In Canada, few policies have been debated, criticized, and mulled over more than multiculturalism. Criticisms of the policy have been levelled continuously from the right and left of the political spectrum. One of the most well-known conservative critiques of multiculturalism is that it will only foster cultural fragmentation and disunity, rather than binding people to a common culture. Left-wing critics have long argued that the policy deals inadequately with racism and institutional discrimination and the power inequalities that keep racial minorities and indigenous peoples in subordinate positions (Henry 2002). Despite the policy’s inadequacies, one positive effect it has had in a province like Ontario is to create a normative context within which racial minorities and immigrants can legitimately make claims on the state (Bloemraad 2005). As Bloemraad (2005) has written, the federal funding for multiculturalism had for years enabled immigrant organizations to provide crucial services to communities; in addition, it endowed these organizations with the legitimacy to mobilize politically and to defend the rights

of immigrants. When the Conservative government of Stephen Harper won the federal elections of 2006, it proceeded to cut the funding for race- and ethno-specific organizations, according to a respondent in the study. The same respondent explained that the black community organization he was involved in Toronto had learned to survive mainly on grants provided by the United Way of Toronto. Even before the Harper regime, scholars had reported that neo-liberal cutbacks to immigrant organizations were making it increasingly untenable for these organizations to maintain services and remain politically active (Richmond and Shields 2005).

The race relations approach—informed by the American experience with race relations and the 1960s breakthroughs in civil rights legislation—arose briefly in the 1980s in Toronto before being replaced by anti-racism in the 1990s (Kempthorne 2013). The race relations model operates with a Liberal conception of individual equality and views racism as a problem of human relations that can be remedied through inter-racial contact and understanding. This was the perspective of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations when it first opened (Siemiatycki et al. 2003). As the Alliance embarked on a series of independent studies into racism in policing, education, employment and media in the 1970s, it took on a more systemic view of racism as a structural and institutional problem (Siemiatycki et al. 2003). The Alliance subsequently turned its attention towards changing organizational policies and practices and began carrying out advocacy activities aimed at public and private institutions such as, schools, the police, media, and employment.

Unlike multiculturalism and the race relations paradigm, anti-racism follows the premise that racism is a structural problem reproduced daily through unequal power relations and disparate access to resources and opportunities. It believes that real change must come through a full transformation in the ideas, policies, and practices of institutions and the broader society.

Anti-racism got its first significant boost in 1991 in Toronto, when the left-wing New Democratic Party (NDP) took everyone by surprise by winning the election in a province that tended to lean Liberal or conservative. Prior to the election, the NDP had vowed, if elected, to create a special agency to tackle racism. According to Harney (2002), the impetus for such a policy came from two sources: Caribbean and Indian professionals in school board administration who had been involved in the implementation of anti-racism in local education authorities in Britain before migrating to Canada; and anti-fascist activists who had been fighting against skinheads and Neo-Nazis in the city's east end (Harney 2002; Stasiulis 1989).

The Anti-Racism Secretariat's lifespan was unexpectedly short-lived, as it was summarily abolished by the Conservative party once it won the elections of 1995. Throughout its few short years, the Secretariat rose to be staffed by a team of 50 full-time professionals and had been busily producing educational materials, writing handbooks and guidelines on anti-racism policy and practices, creating the province's first employment equity policy, managing a special youth placement program, and distributing millions of dollars in grants for community organizations to lead anti-racism initiatives (Harney 2002). The abolition of the Secretariat represented a major setback for the anti-racism movement in Toronto. Between 1995 and 2003, the Conservative government not only dismantled the Anti-Racism Secretariat, but also repealed the NDP's Employment Equity Act and slashed the budgets for community organizations. A report by the United Way documented that a total of 54 social service agencies were forced to close during 1995 and 1996, compared to only 7 in the previous two years (Evans and Shields 1998). Though the Conservative government sought to discredit the push for anti-racism, the community mobilization in Toronto would continue (Siemiatycki et al. 2002; Viswanathan

2009). Nevertheless, it took another twenty years for the provincial government to revive the anti-racism policies of the former NDP leadership.

In 2016, the Liberal government in power decided to re-establish the Anti-Racism Secretariat. In 2017, it approved new legislation an anti-racism strategic plan and established a special Anti-Racism Directorate. The new Directorate is responsible for overseeing implementation of the anti-racism plan across the many branches of the provincial government as well as directing two separate sub-components of the plan, one on anti-black racism and a second on racism against indigenous peoples. Either independently or in communication with the province, the City of Toronto introduced its own plan against anti-black racism in 2017.

Decentralization

In direct juxtaposition with Quebec's centralized system of policy-making, Ontario operates in a way that is more decentralized and fragmented and where power is concentrated in Toronto, the province's largest city and its most urban, culturally diverse, and wealth-generating region. Mahon (2010) and Hudson and Graefe (2011) write that most social policy innovations in Ontario begin in Toronto and reflect the ideas of the city's many progressive grassroots networks and social movements. While it has been said that Ontario as a whole tends to be politically conservative, the central city of Toronto has long had a vibrant and sizeable left-wing made up of social democrats in the city's municipality, educated professionals and homeowners from historic neighborhoods in the downtown core, and the countless non-profit organizations and advocacy networks clustered in the city. Over the years, the city of Toronto gained a reputation for innovative experimentation in the areas of urban housing, environmental protection, public

transit, poverty and more (Sellers 2015). These progressive forces were assembled mostly in the downtown area of the City and were a driving force in municipal politics. Once the downtown municipality was merged with its more conservative-leaning suburban neighbors in 1997, the balance of forces shifted decidedly in favor of the city's economic elites, yet the spirit of activism that thrived in Toronto stayed alive and would be part of the resistance to the post-1995 neo-liberal transition of the Harris regime. To this day, movements for progressive social policy in Toronto draw their strength from the sheer density of NGOs and networks in Toronto and the cooperation of municipal officials and private foundations. In 2007, it was precisely such an alliance—aided financially and administratively by the municipality and private foundations and led by a well-established group of non-profit service providers, churches, labor associations, and social policy think tanks in Toronto—that succeeded in getting the Liberal provincial government to ratify a new poverty reduction strategy (Hudson and Graefe 2011).

Relative to a city like Montreal, events in Toronto resonate more powerfully at the provincial level. After amalgamation in 1997, the municipality of Toronto even began to see itself as a national player, going as far as to make a request for provincial status. There are several reasons for the superior political clout of Toronto's municipality and civil society. Among them we can cite: the city's unique legal status vis-à-vis the provincial state, its rise as a city-region since amalgamation and the resulting high concentrations of people, wealth, business, and cultural diversity in the metropolis. In the years after amalgamation, the municipality successfully fought for and won the right to collect its own taxes and govern certain areas of policy independently. As the province's capital, Toronto is also the headquarters for the provincial government. The physical proximity between advocacy networks in Toronto and the provincial state enables the former to easily "jump scale" and influence politicians and Ministry

officials to a greater extent than their counterparts in the regions (Hudson and Graefe 2011). Toronto also derives its political strength from the impressive size and density of its population, its enormous geographic scale, its position as a regional economic powerhouse, and the exceptionally high percentages of recent immigrants and racial and ethnic minorities. Estimates indicate that in 2008, 43% of the City of Toronto's population was a person of color and close to 50% was foreign-born (Siemiatycki 2011). While other Ontario municipalities have even higher proportions of immigrant, Toronto remains the city in Canada with the highest degree of ethnic heterogeneity. As Siemiatycki (2011: 1226) has suggested, municipal and provincial authorities can ill afford to ignore the interests of Toronto's immigrant and racial minority communities, because of their growing electoral strength. At this point, Toronto's identity has become so intertwined with immigration and cultural diversity that any politician who opposes it risks defeat. Indeed, diversity has literally become part of Toronto's brand name and the city's marketing strategy to outsiders, captured in the official motto, "Diversity is our Strength" (Ahmadi 2017; Croucher 1997; Siemiatycki 2011).

The legal and political autonomy of post-amalgamation City of Toronto creates two unique conditions that are relevant to the present study. First, it grants the Mayor and municipal councilors a certain degree of discretion and leeway to direct urban policy in ways they see fit, even if this deviates from provincial policy. Secondly, it has prompted local social movements and advocacy networks to organize politically at the city-regional level and transcend the old neighborhood and municipal boundaries (Boudreau et al. 2006). Prior to amalgamation, non-profits and coalitions would be isolated in their respective municipalities; now, Toronto-based coalitions will span the entire city, thus enlarging the scope, reach, and numerical strength of advocacy networks. In Montreal, advocacy coalitions are far less inclined to mobilize around the

municipality (Boudreau et al. 2006). As the municipality of Montreal has less of a say on the political and financial fortunes of the local non-profit sector, policy networks and grassroots coalitions try instead to influence the policies of the borough and the provincial state. Non-profit organizations in Montreal depend quite heavily on the provincial government for funding, which increases the incentive to engage in province-wide, rather than city-wide, advocacy coalitions. Unlike Montreal, the City of Toronto also maintains a greater interest in developing its bi-lateral relationship with the federal government and provincial government.

Chapter Three of the dissertation illustrated how the Mayor of Toronto, social democrat David Miller, resisted for months the pressure coming from conservative city councilors and media pundits during 2004 and 2005 to take a tougher and more aggressive stance on crime. When the gun violence peaked in the summer of 2005, he turned down the Toronto police's requests for funding to hire new police officers. When the uproar over the urban violence gathered pace after the Boxing Day shooting in December 2005, he was the last to claim that policing was the answer, after federal politicians had already begun proclaiming the necessity of tougher sentencing and gun laws. Throughout, the Mayor maintained an independent opinion and never gave up his argument that the solution to the violence ought to be crime prevention, rather than policing. As quoted in Chapter Three, Mayor Miller openly asserted that, "the police can deal with guns...but jobs are not something the police can produce" (International Observer 2005). Miller was also not shy about holding the provincial and federal governments accountable, by insisting they do more to strengthen social programs in low-income neighborhoods (De Sakar 2005). This was the post-Harris period when a consensus, certainly in left-wing corners, was emerging that the upsurge in violence among the city's disadvantaged youth was a consequence of the neo-liberal cutbacks to the welfare state and their devastating

effects on an already serious crisis of poverty. In addition to poverty and youth, Mayor Miller championed the cause of immigrants and refugees during his time in power and chaired the city's "Immigration and Refugee Working Group" in addition to sitting on the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council (Good 2004). On some issues, however, such as women and gender equity, Mayor was not found to be especially progressive and pro-active (Bashevkin 2005).

The political postures taken by Mayor Miller during the crisis period of 2005 are indicative of the municipality's autonomy and suggest that what the City of Toronto says or does has meaningful consequences for policy. If one compares the situation to Montreal, the local Mayor was never heard speaking publicly about the violence or declaring any policy positions. Furthermore, the municipality of Montreal holds limited power to shape its own policies. For the action plan against street gangs, City of Montreal officials interviewed for this study claimed they essentially acted as a "sub-contractor" for the provincial state, by distributing the funds for "gang prevention" to deserving community organizations across Montreal. On the whole, the City of Montreal appeared to have worked in lock-step with the Ministry of Public Security.

The independence of the City of Toronto seems to bear direct implications not only for actual policy, but also for the public and closed-door deliberations that take place when the policy agenda is being set. One could argue that the Toronto Mayor's independent stance on the violence widened the debate about the causes and solutions and kept the policy process from being reactive or usurped by one view or one set of partisan interests. Two completely opposing views vied for attention in the political and public arena in Toronto: one supportive of community prevention, and the other calling for policing. In Montreal, the city's police became the primary gatekeeper to the local press and controlled the way in which the incidents of

violence were portrayed and talked about. No other perspectives were ever given a hearing in the Montreal press (or rarely). As a result, the press and local police shaped the agenda-setting on the urban violence by making “street gangs” out to be the primary problem.

For black community organizations and coalitions in Toronto, the physical location of the provincial government in Toronto has allowed them to stay in relatively close and continuous contact with politicians and Ministry officials. Politicians belonging to the black Liberal caucus, for example, would convene regularly during the difficult period of the early 2000s and consult with leaders of black community organizations in Toronto. As reported in Chapter Three, Dr. Alvin Curling, a black Liberal politician, was part of a group of senior leaders who approached the provincial Premier in 2005 about conducting an inquiry into the violence, which became the *Roots of Violence Report* (2008). For the black community coalition in Toronto, which has been active since the 2005, one strategy it has used to engage and negotiate with policy-makers is to request formal meetings with officials at all levels of the government, including municipal, provincial, and federal. Since the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) launched its new provincial action plan for black youth in 2017, the coalition has been sponsoring and facilitating regular meetings with Ministry officials to discuss the policy’s execution. An official of the MCYS interviewed for this study also claimed his agency has long depended on, and benefitted from, the expertise of black community organizations in orienting and evaluating policy. As explained in Chapter Three, the MCYS replicated the youth employment program of Tropicana Community Services, a black community organization, in modelling its own program for the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* of 2006. The same Ministry official volunteered that he had begun holding regular informal meetings with black community organizations as a way for the agency to remain aware of developments on the ground and to ascertain whether policies are

having their intended effects or not. It appears, therefore, that both the MCYS and black community organizations in Toronto have taken the initiative to improve the channels of communication between them. It is not known what tangible results these consultations have produced; according to interviewees on both sides, the two-way communication between the state and front-line agencies is essential if policies are to be culturally appropriate and effective.

In the literature, Toronto is regarded as a leader and exemplar in municipal responsiveness to diversity and immigration (Good 2004; Siemiatycki 2011). No other Canadian city has gone as far as to make inclusion and equity overarching goals of policy and governance. The City created a special unit called “Diversity Management and Community Engagement,” which is attached to the office of the Chief Administrative Officer (Good 2004). In 1999, the municipality set up the Task Force on Access and Equity, which led to the creation of the Race and Ethnic Relations Advisory Committee, a body whose role is to advise City Council on questions of “access, equity and human rights” (Good 2009). In 2000, the city commissioned a study on racial and ethnic inequality in Toronto and the highly damning results of the statistical report (Ornstein 2000) served as ammunition for anti-poverty and anti-racism coalitions to mobilize. The network “Colour of Poverty” emerged directly as a result of the research report (Shakir 2011). Over the years, the municipality would adopt various other policies to increase diversity and equality of access, including an employment equity policy, an action plan against racism and discrimination, an immigration and settlement policy framework, a human rights policy, and a hate activity policy (Good 2009; Siemiatycki 2011). The paradox, according to Siemiatycki (2011), is that these progressive policies have been introduced by an administration that remains largely white and native-born and where people of color and immigrants continue to be significantly under-represented. In 2006, racial minority candidates constituted 9% of the

newly elected city councilors in Toronto, even though they represented more than 40% of the city's population (Siemiatycki 2011).

Though limited empirical work has been done on the subject, scholars claim the Toronto municipality's more pro-active stance on diversity and immigration can be ascribed to several factors, namely its population make-up, the leadership by municipal councilors and Mayors, the mobilization of advocacy groups working on immigrant settlement and anti-racism, and the interests of economic elites (Good 2009; Siemiatycki 2011). The old Metro Toronto had a progressive core of civil servants such as those attached to the municipality's Social Planning Unit. Once the unit was absorbed into the amalgamated municipality, it retained its original identity and continued to advance social justice and pro-equality policies (Horak 2010). Hudson and Graefe (2011) also write that left-wing city councilors in Toronto have voluntarily given their support behind-the-scenes to assist grassroots coalitions in campaigning for progressive social policies, such as the province's poverty reduction strategy. In 2007, the municipality seconded two professionals to support the still fledgling anti-poverty coalition and equip it with a small secretariat, office space, and some administrative overhead (Hudson and Graefe 2011). As a whole, the non-profit sector in Toronto is large, vibrant, politically engaged, and deeply interconnected. Within Toronto alone, a total of 197 organizations were found to be active in immigrant settlement in 2005 (Lim, Siemiatycki, and Doucet 2005). If one were to count the numerous ethno-specific organizations in Toronto, the list might very well surpass 300. In general, coalition-building among immigrant organizations, ethno-cultural associations, and anti-racism groups in Toronto has been frequent and smooth (Good 2009; Shakir 2011). Private foundations and the business community in Toronto have also taken visible steps to promote policies supportive of immigration and racial equity. The *Maytree Foundation* and *Laidlaw*

Foundation have both provided financing for community organizations delivering services to immigrants in Toronto and sought to improve the research and technical knowledge base on immigrant integration and racial equality (Good 2009). Among its innovative strategies, the Maytree foundation founded the *Funders Network on Racism and Poverty*. The *Toronto Civic Action Network*, an alliance formed by business leaders to help shape urban policy in the city, has sponsored various initiatives to strengthen services for immigrants and to improve the representation of racial minorities and immigrants in the local economy and polity.

It must be noted that not everyone is as quick to celebrate the Toronto municipality's record on diversity (Ahmadi 2017; Croucher 1997; Boudreau et al. 2009). Some scholars claim the city's policies lack teeth and remain more superficial than real (Ahmadi, 2017). Local community organizations report that the city's policies are generally not matched with the requisite financial resources. In her study, Good (2004) found that the Ornstein (2000) report had been shelved and it took pressure from community organizations for the city to come up with the Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination. Even this particular plan was not matched with any firm financial commitments. Critics further point out that racial inequality and exclusion have shown limited signs of progress (Boudreau et al. 2009). Thus, in the eyes of many, the municipality's actions on racial equity and integration leave much to be desired.

Political Mobilization

One of the most remarkable differences between Toronto and Montreal is the character and intensity of black community mobilization. In Toronto, it began in the 1960s and has mushroomed ever since, while in Montreal, it seems to have been thriving and growing before

showing a decline since the mid-2000s. As has been already suggested, the gradual disappearance of black-led organizations in Montreal may partly be due to the 1989 ban on funding for ethno-specific organizations, which remains in effect to this day. In Toronto, black organizations have access to funding from several sources, including the three levels of government (i.e., municipal, provincial, and federal), the *United Way*, and private foundations. The United Way has been a dependable source of funding for groups such as the *Jamaican Canadian Association* and *Tropicana Services*. In interviews, directors of both of these organizations expressed grave concern about the new funding format the *United Way* was considering, in which organizations would have to seek funding as part of a collective rather than individually. They believed such an outcome would drive a significant hole into their budgets and make it harder to operate. In Montreal, black organizations have no access to provincial or federal funding, unless those funds are intended to serve an immigrant or multicultural clientele. While figures are hard to come by, there may well be over 100 non-profit organizations whose mandate it is to serve the black community in Toronto. According to records for 2015, the *Coalition of African-Canadian Community Organizations* had 30 non-profit organizations as members, along with dozens of other individuals from the private and public sector. A coalition for African organizations alone, the *Council of African Organizations in Ontario*, had as many as 40 organizational members in 1999 (Lewinberg 1999). Another interesting aspect of black community mobilization in Toronto is the number of individual activists, academics, public sector professionals, and journalists who have played leadership roles. The Anti-Black Racism Network, for example, was founded by tenured black professors working in public universities in Toronto. Desmond Cole, an independent journalist, became the public face of the Black Lives Matter movement in Toronto after he published an article in the magazine *Toronto Life*, entitled

“The Skin I’m In,” in which he painfully recounts the 50 times he has been randomly stopped by the police (Cole, 2015).

The activities of black organizations in Toronto have ranged from protest to collaboration with the state. Individuals, groups, and coalitions from the black community in Toronto have advocated for changes to policy on everything from policing, child welfare, education, racial discrimination, urban violence, young people, poverty, and jobs (Gooden 2008). The ability of black communities in Toronto to form non-profit organizations seems to have provided a space and a means for them to mobilize politically and to advocate for race-conscious policies. Plus, the presence of such a dense and varied network of black organizations has likely strengthened the capacity of the sector as a whole to win the attention and support of government institutions. Moreover, black organizations have not been alone in fighting for racial justice: they have been joined by organizations representing a variety of other constituencies, including members of the South Asian, Chinese, Latino, Arab, and Jewish diasporas and First Nations in Toronto.

A veteran community organizer interviewed for this study did caution that the dependence of community organizations on state funding does compromise their ability to speak freely and independently. The interviewee, a former member of the now defunct Black Action Defense Committee, an organization set up in the 1980s to respond to police killings of black males, explained that the organization had consciously refused to rely on government funding, because it wanted to maintain its freedom to speak critically and to protest. The black organizations that have chosen to take the route of protest and contestation have done so at considerable cost. According to reports, the most radical and outspoken groups such as, the Black Action Defense Committee and the African-Canadian Legal Clinic, have had their phones wire-tapped and been subject to police harassment (Benjamin 2002; Gooden 2008).

It is important to note that black community organizations and activists are hardly a homogenous group. Differences in generational status, background, national and cultural origins, political orientation, and religious beliefs abound (Lewinberg 1999; Rose 2015). In an interview with a director of a long-standing Afro-Caribbean organization in Toronto, it was remarked that having political differences among black organizations can, in some ways, be productive for political debate and policy. As head of an agency involved in service delivery, who could not declare any strong political allegiances and who had to be careful not to upset donors, she believed that it was helpful to have some groups out there actively protesting and holding the state accountable. In her view, critical voices were necessary to raise awareness of the issues, to solidify the case for community programs, and to keep up the pressure for policy change.

Political Representation

One final factor that explains why the policy-making in 2005 took a race-conscious direction in Ontario and not in Quebec is the higher representation of black politicians in provincial political parties. The periods in which most advances have been made in race policy in Ontario have been under the Liberal administration of the last 14 years and the brief period of rule by the left-wing National Democratic Party during 1990 and 1995. In Ontario, blacks are more likely to vote for and run for office with the Liberal party and NDP than the Conservative party. It is noteworthy that under Liberal and NDP administrations, senior black civil servants and appointed Ministers played significant, if not direct, roles in steering the implementation of race-conscious policies. Between 1992 and 1995, senior black civil servants were close advisors of Premier Bob Rae and held major responsibilities for getting the new Anti-Racism Secretariat

into operation (Lewinberg 1999). Fast forward to 2005 and we have Mary Ann Chambers, a black female and Minister of Child and Youth Services who acted as the policy entrepreneur for the *Youth Opportunities Strategy*. Mary Ann Chambers was born in Jamaica and immigrated to Canada in the 1970s, after which she built a successful career in the private sector and as a philanthropist. She did not choose to run for election in 2003 and was recruited by the Liberal party who had asked her to run for a seat in the district of Scarborough. Ms. Chambers' career in politics was short-lived and she left in 2007, in part because of her dismay with politics. In an interview for the present study, she refused to explain what caused her to leave, though she did say that she never saw or considered herself a politician. She accepted to run for office only to fulfill a mission to serve the public. In her own words, she explained: *"I served for 4 years and I was determined to have an impact. I never expected to be a career politician."* In another part of the interview, she described the role that she had to play, and that any Minister must play, in getting policies off the ground: *"Every new policy has to have a champion. It doesn't just happen. The role of the bureaucrats is to make proposals based on what the political lead (the Minister) has identified as important. The bureaucrats are not supposed to be political. An effective Minister will say, 'this is what needs to be done.' And the Ministry officials are supposed to basically develop the policies the Minister has identified. The bureaucrats are led by the Deputy Minister. He or she says 'this is what we are working on, and what are your priorities.'" As already indicated, Dr. Alvin Curling is another black Liberal MP who played a pivotal role in the policy process in 2005 and who became co-author of the province's first and only major study on youth violence, the "Roots of Violence Report." That report has gone on to become a significant source of information and guidance for the province's youth development framework, "Stepping Up." More recently in 2016, Michael Coteau, a third prominent black*

Liberal politician, was appointed Minister of Child and Youth Services and head of the new Anti-Racism Directorate. Under his leadership, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services introduced a new action plan specifically for black youth in Ontario in 2017, a strategy never attempted before. One interviewee who was close to the scenes claimed that Michael Coteau had to fight passionately and against much resistance to get the action plan for black youth approved.

Conclusions

The comparison of Quebec and Ontario reveals the many layers that must be pulled apart to understand the root causes of the differences in their policy responses to the urban violence. The basic factor comes down to the culture and structure of local political institutions and the extent to which they integrate racial minority actors and perspectives. At the core of the divergence is the contrast between multiculturalism in Ontario and minority nationalism in Quebec. While one province has come to recognize racial and cultural diversity as a central fact, the other is still negotiating the tensions between minority nationalism and pluralism. These different political conditions have given rise to uneven levels of racial political integration. Even though black political representation remains low in Ontario, it has long been higher than in Quebec. As findings showed, black political actors located within and outside the government were mobilized in 2005 and advocated forcefully for systemic solutions to the violence. In Quebec, they were neither mobilized nor involved in any of the discussions around the action plan against street gangs.

A secondary explanation for the divergence would be the composition, ideas, and tactics of social movements in the two provinces. In Ontario, multi-racial movements have been

prominent for decades and received official recognition from high-level government inquiries such as, the 1992 Stephen Lewis report. Black political actors have had many allies among other groups and organizations working for racial and economic justice in Toronto. In Quebec, minority nationalism and a politics of class and gender equity have marginalized issues of racial equality and diversity. Policies in support of multiculturalism in Ontario and inter-culturalism in Quebec have also created seemingly unequal political opportunity structures for racial minority groups to organize, form coalitions, and lobby government. Despite its well-known weaknesses, multiculturalism seems to have provided a more favorable context than inter-culturalism in Quebec for black communities to form grassroots organizations that are then in a position to exert political pressure on the state and build an independent political platform. Through a combination of symbolic and material constraints, sub-state nationalism in Quebec has had the effect of discouraging racial minority groups from mobilizing on the basis of race.

The class and cultural slant in Quebec policy is reinforced through institutional mechanisms that leave racial and ethnic minorities under-represented in political office and in spaces where non-profit coalitions engage in negotiations with the state. These mechanisms include centralization and corporatism. In Ontario, decentralization has created more openings for grassroots movements in Toronto to affect the policies of the provincial state. In addition, black professionals in Toronto have long been courted by and engaged with the National Democratic party and the Liberal party in Ontario, seized opportunities to become elected representatives, and been appointed to positions of authority in government.

In sum, the key to the puzzle lies in the interaction between provincial political institutions and the political power of black constituencies. In Quebec, the absence of black political voices kept the policy process under the control of police chiefs and their allies in the

Ministry of Public Security. Even though certain members of the Ministry's inter-departmental committee expressed concerns about the law enforcement thrust of the policy, their recommendations went unheeded. In Ontario, black political actors within and outside the state, together with their left-leaning allies in Toronto, kept the agenda-setting from being steered solely in the direction of law enforcement, by continually bringing the attention back to the systemic causes of the urban violence and placing the fault on the neo-liberal cuts and the deepening crisis of urban poverty and racial inequality. The wider range of opinions in Ontario and the ability of black political actors to articulate policy proposals attentive to racism and racial inequality, at a time when the Liberal party was busy experimenting with social investment strategies, ultimately laid the conditions for a more appropriate and effective response to the urban violence than in Quebec.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The objective of the dissertation has been to wrestle with and make sense of the seeming contradictions in the responses of provincial governments in Ontario and Quebec to incidents of urban unrest in 2005. It has done so by weaving together findings from qualitative interviews and archival material and matching them with the relevant empirical and theoretical bodies of literature. The first and most obvious place to begin in analyzing the contrasts is in the causal diagnosis of the urban violence, which was dramatically different across the two contexts. In Quebec, the violence was said to be the work of violent street gangs, composed mainly of black and Latino youth from economically distressed neighborhoods of Montreal. In Ontario, the fault was laid not on youth, but on the state, and the crisis set in motion by the neo-liberal rollback of the welfare state in the 1990s, which had coincided with and aggravated already serious problems of rising inequality, deepening poverty, and racial residential segregation in Toronto.

As the dissertation has shown, the proximate reasons for the disparate causal diagnosis of the urban violence can be found by examining the precise constellation of actors, coalitions, and institutions that came together to affect the course of the policy-making in 2005. Yet, a deeper understanding of the root causes of the policy deviations must look farther back in time to the history of race policy and social policy within each province. As discussed in Chapter Five, the policy process in Ontario in 2005 was more racially-conscious due to several historical factors, namely: a tradition of multiculturalism, decentralization in policy-making, black political mobilization, and vibrant multi-racial movements for social justice located in Toronto. In Quebec, the policy process remained color-blind and conceptualized race as a function of culture and ethnicity, rather than racial inequality and discrimination. Black political actors were kept

marginal to the policy process from beginning to end, even though the policy was written with black youth in mind. By excluding black and Latino constituencies from the policy process, the Montreal police department was able to push through a punitive law-and-order agenda under a relative cloak of secrecy and safe from public scrutiny. In Quebec, policy-makers placed their trust in the police's expertise on the urban violence; in Ontario, black political actors and their allies focused the attention not on youth delinquency, but on the role of the state in allowing problems of racial inequality, poverty, and racism to deteriorate and reach crisis levels.

The dissertation has concluded that Ontario's policy has represented a more constructive solution to the urban violence than Quebec's approach to date. Since 2005, Ontario's youth policy has lasted and been expanded, while Quebec's anti-gang action plan was abandoned in 2015, in part because the issue of street gangs was no longer as newsworthy or as politically salient as it was in 2005. For reasons that are not hard to grasp, the causal diagnosis of social democrats, black Liberal politicians, and black community coalitions in Toronto was more accurate and closer to the realities on the ground than the police's version of events in Quebec.

In managing complex social problems, it is not uncommon for public institutions to look for ways to condense complicated issues into terms that are legible, manageable, and politically suitable such as, the "gang" concept in Quebec (Schneider and Ingram 2005). The idea of "street gangs" appears to have done more to satisfy the interests of a state and a police service eager to re-establish a sense of public security, than to meet the real needs of black youth struggling to get by and succeed in low-income settings. Prior research has shown that the political preoccupation with "street gangs" ignores and displaces the complex causes and manifestations of urban distress and youth delinquency in settings marked by chronic poverty, high unemployment, racial segregation, and police interference (Hallsworth and Young 2008).

In setting out to understand the reasons for the policy variations across Ontario and Quebec, the dissertation has offered a two-part analysis of the immediate causes of the policy change in 2006 and the broad range of forces that drove the two provinces not only to move down alternative paths, but to break with their own traditions of social policy. Each question brought up a different set of variables and required its own analytical and theoretical lens. One of the more remarkable findings is that the causes of the policy change in each province were roughly the same, and involved a combination of exogenous pressures (prompted by high-profile “focusing events”) and the electoral incentives of the government in power. Surprisingly, both provinces initiated the abrupt policy change after explosive and dramatic incidents of gun violence in urban areas that were regarded as direct threats to public safety. Both in Montreal and Toronto, episodes of gun violence rose to the top of the policy agenda when they spilled over from low-income neighborhoods into mainstream public spaces. Shifts in federal policy also played an indirect role in the policy changes, as both provinces boosted their operations on “youth gangs” after the federal government released a multi-million-dollar budget in October 2005, specifically to prop up the capacities of police departments to fight youth gangs. Upon receipt of the funding, both provinces established new anti-gang squads that would later be accused of racial profiling (Charest 2009; Rankin 2012). It is worth noting that police departments of Toronto and Montreal have both followed in the footsteps of American-inspired practices of “broken windows” policing, in which patrol officers are given additional powers and discretion to stop, question, and arrest young people on the street (Sylvestre 2010). Compared with Quebec, however, Ontario did not just expand law enforcement but also made significant new investments in social and community programs for young people in low-income

communities of Toronto and across the province, first with the *Youth Opportunities Strategy* of 2006, followed by the *Youth Action Plan* in place today.

Upon reflection, the study for the dissertation may have adopted a vision of the two provincial social policy regimes that was overly general and perhaps even stereotypical. In the mid-1990s, the two provinces did diverge dramatically, with Quebec becoming more like a social democratic state, and Ontario undergoing its most sweeping neo-liberal turn in history. However, in both cases, the 1990 reforms were fairly unprecedented and not deep-rooted. Moreover, traditions of Liberal, social democratic, and Conservative politics have co-existed and competed with each other within each province. Thus, the dissertation concludes that caution is warranted in ascribing any single label to the two provinces; Ontario is neither fully neo-liberal, and nor is Quebec wholly social democratic. It does remain true that the provinces have developed contrasting political regimes, except, the “neo-liberal versus social democracy” typology may not be the best way to capture the differences. As the dissertation has shown, the variations between nationalism and multiculturalism, and centralization and decentralization were both real and consequential for the policy process in each process. Whether these political differences constitute distinct “regimes” remains to be determined and is worth considering.

By comparing the interplay of institutions, ideas, actors, and social movements across the two provinces the dissertation concludes that the one variable that most distinguishes the policy process across the two provinces is the participation of black political actors. Black political actors occupied institutional positions through which they could try to and did influence the policy process, yet they were also pro-active in inserting themselves into the public conversation and in behind-the-scenes negotiations with state representatives. The leadership of black Liberal politicians and black grassroots coalitions in mobilizing political opinion and

centering the policy agenda on the systemic causes of the violence was decisive in Ontario in 2005. Had they not been mobilized and vocal both before and during 2005, it is quite possible a different outcome would have arisen. In Quebec, black political actors were conspicuously absent throughout the policy process. The policy coalition that formed in 2004 was made up of state agencies who kept the policy process centralized in Quebec City and hand-picked the NGOs they already knew and cooperated with to come on board as partners. In Ontario, the organizational coalition was looser and more expansive and featured a significant core of non-state actors, including representatives of the large network of black community organizations in Toronto. Consequently, the policy debates in Ontario were considerably broader in perspective and more public, with actors from the philanthropic sector, business, the Toronto municipality, and black activists and service providers all voicing the same argument about the need to undo the yawning gaps in the public and social infrastructure of low-income suburbs.

The finding that the combination of black political mobilization and a decentralized state was responsible for moving policy in a more race-conscious direction in Ontario bears a striking resemblance with previous comparative research. In one study, Lieberman (2002) concluded that the existence of an infrastructure of African-American civil rights organizations, together with the decentralized structure of policy-making in the United States, explains why the United States has gone farther than Britain and France in introducing civil rights and affirmative action legislation. A decentralized state like the United States creates more loopholes and openings for interest groups and social movements to shift policy in a favorable direction, by enabling them to exert direct pressure on politicians, legislators, and bureaucrats. In the centralized systems of France and Britain, where decision-making is kept under the control of politicians and bureaucrats, non-state actors have fewer opportunities to intervene in and influence the

legislative-making process. In addition, neither Britain nor France has had a black civil rights movement on the same scale as the United States. In Britain, for example, social movements have been organized more along the lines of class than race (Teles 1998).

Provincial political institutions in Ontario and Quebec did not just determine which actors and interests had access to, and influence over, the policy-making process, but also which ideas and policy solutions were favored over others. As the dissertation has argued, the standard way of interpreting race relations in Quebec is through a prism of culture and ethnicity. Policy-makers in Quebec maintained that the policy was color-blind, even while they asserted that black and Latino youth were the primary participants in “street gangs” in those years. While they were prepared to admit that racial inequality and racism were causes of the urban violence, they had neither the tools nor the ability to integrate this into the policy. In Ontario, concepts of multiculturalism, race relations, and anti-racism have co-existed and been interwoven in public debates and policy. In interviews, policy-makers in Ontario spoke as though it was taken for granted that racial inequality and racism ought to be integral to the policy deliberations.

Contrary to Ontario, Quebec does not have (and never has had) an explicit and coherent policy frame on racial inequality; rather, questions of racial inequality are obscured and kept marginal to policy. Whether by accident or design, the policy of inter-culturalism and sub-state nationalism in Quebec have reproduced a hierarchical relationship in which the interests of racial and ethnic minorities are kept subordinate to the needs and aspirations of the white Francophone majority. With the return of a conservative nationalism on the political scene, the symbolic division between the two groups has been further intensified. Compared with Ontario, Quebec has been reluctant to acknowledge racial inequality as a constitutive feature of Quebec society. In general, racial and ethnic minorities continue to be socially constructed as immigrants and

cultural outsiders (or “cultural communities”) in contrast with a monolithic bloc of white Francophones who are the carriers of the province’s collective identity. Obstacles to social mobility for native-born racial minorities in Quebec naturally go unnoticed.

To borrow a concept from Favell (1998), the core philosophies of the Quebec state (i.e., minority nationalism and inter-culturalism) set the stage for a policy on the urban violence that placed culture, ethnicity, and class in the foreground and took little or no account of racial inequality. It is also interesting to note that in looking for technical solutions, policy-makers in Quebec turned to the United States rather than France, even though Quebec has previously followed France on issues such as immigration. For the policy on street gangs, the Quebec Ministry of Public Security and its partners turned to the province’s Anglophone neighbors. As shown, the federal government actually came up with a strategic plan on “youth gangs” a full year before Quebec. For months, officials from the Ministry of Public Security in Quebec were attending meetings of inter-provincial and national committees in which one of the major topics under discussion was “youth gangs.” At the time, few Canadian publications existed on the subject of youth gangs; consequently, Quebec criminologists went in search of answers by consulting the American literature on gangs and observing model programs in major US cities. Findings grounded in US experience were adapted unquestioningly into the Montreal context, further reinforcing racial stereotypes of youth gangs, even as the empirical evidence was lacking in Montreal to support any definitive claims about the racialization of street gangs.

In Ontario, the combination of path-dependent national (or provincial) political philosophies and grassroots policy frames were also at play in the making of the youth policy. As indicated, race policies in Ontario have evolved through a mix of federal multiculturalism, race relations, and anti-racism. The anti-racism frame comes from movements from below, not from

the state. Yet, the determined efforts of anti-racism activists working in the public sector and multi-racial grassroots coalitions seemed to have had an impact on mainstream policy discourse. One of its achievements appears to have been to shine a light on the limits of multiculturalism policy and compel authorities to do more to address the systemic causes of racism and racial inequality. The decision by the Ontario provincial government and Toronto municipality to enact an anti-black racism policy in 2017 can only have resulted from pressures from below and the relentless activism of multi-racial coalitions and black grassroots movements in Toronto. As Lieberman (2002) has argued before, policy reforms do not just embody the traits of national models, they also emerge out of political conflicts in which different visions and interests collide, and the tensions between competing groups of actors and agencies must be worked out.

To some extent, the youth policy in Ontario reflects a long history of grassroots mobilization and advocacy on racial inequality and racism, and the multicultural policies of the Liberal party in power. At the same time, certain features of the policy were not so clearly path-dependent and more emblematic of the emerging Canadian social investment paradigm. As discussed in Chapter Three, the decision to focus on youth and employment was partly in response to an objective appraisal of the causes of the urban distress; yet, it also conforms to a general shift in Canadian policy of moving away from universal welfare towards targeted approaches that aim, among other things, to promote human capital development and economic integration, prepare children and young people for the future, and delegate responsibilities for fixing social problems to neighborhoods (Dobrowolsky 2002; Dobrowolsky and Saint-Martin 2005; Sukarieh and Tannock 2011; White 2003). In general, the social rights of citizenship have steadily given way to neo-liberal ideas of individual responsibility, self-reliance, and economic competitiveness (Ilkin and Basok 2004).

In sum, findings from the study reveal that the nexus between political institutions and black political mobilization was the crucial factor that drove the two provinces to move apart on urban policy in 2006. The balance of power between state institutions and black political actors in each province determined which policy frames and ideas were given consideration and which ones were voted out. In Quebec, where black political mobilization was low, the Montreal police assumed the role of expert on the urban violence. In Toronto, black community organizations and politicians did everything they could to contest and prevent the state from approving a harsh law-and-order response to the violence. Contrary to what one would have predicted from their social policy regimes, Ontario's approach to the violence was more progressive than Quebec.

The study confirms that the relationship between social policies and race policies is neither direct nor straightforward: indeed, the two types of policy are frequently contradictory and inconsistent, as previous studies have shown (Dikec 2011; Lieberman 2005). More crucial to the outcome of policy-making on racial inequality is the extent to which political institutions integrate and attend to issues of racial diversity and inequality. Just as progressive social policies have arisen due to the strengths of mobilized constituencies, strategic coalitions, and amenable institutions, so do race-conscious policies. In Ontario, all three of these conditions were in place to activate a race-conscious policy, not so in Quebec.

Though multiculturalism policy has its share of critiques, it can be said to have granted racial and ethnic minority organizations a certain degree of financial and symbolic capital to mobilize politically and defend their interests. When we compare Quebec and Ontario, we see that black community organizations in Toronto have utilized the financial resources available to them to form advocacy coalitions, frame and articulate policy agendas, participate in regular dialogue with policy-makers, and make direct demands on the state. The findings from the

provincial comparison are consistent with Bloemraad's (2005) account of the higher political engagement of immigrant organizations in Canada than in the United States, which the author connects to Canada's multiculturalism policy and its financial support for immigrant settlement services. As Bloemraad (2005) articulates, state policies in any given setting effectively "crowd-out" some activities while making others possible. Unfortunately, the future of race- and ethno-specific organizations remains uncertain since the Conservative government slashed federal funding in 2006. In Quebec, ethno- and race-specific organizations have been deprived of the financial support and legitimacy to operate like their counterparts in Ontario. Indeed, the argument has been that ethno-specific organizations are incompatible with, and counterproductive to, Quebec inter-culturalism. Such an assumption seems to have been unfounded. If anything, ethno- and race-specific communities in Montreal have been further marginalized politically by the ban on funding. The goals of inter-culturalism will never be met as long as public policies do not enable minority communities to engage on an equal playing field with the majority group. If black communities in Canada are to have their interests represented in policy-making, they must be able to form independent bases of political power, participate in policy networks, and rise up the ranks of political parties and bureaucracies, as the evidence from Ontario has shown. The potential for black political integration to meaningfully improve in Montreal will depend squarely on the actions and commitment of the provincial state.

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EDUCATION

- | | | |
|-------|------|---|
| Ph.D. | 2018 | Sociology Johns Hopkins University Dissertation Title: "Racial Politics and Social Policy in Urban Canada." Committee Members: Andrew Cherlin, Kathryn Edin, Sarah Jordaán, Steve Teles, and Robert Lieberman (Chair). |
| M.A. | 1998 | Sociology (<i>summa cum laude</i>) McGill University Thesis Title: "Women's Participation in Primary Health Care in Ghana: Findings from a Three-Village Study." |
| B.A. | 1993 | Psychology Concordia University |

LANGUAGES

English and French Fluency

AWARDS AND HONORS

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 2018-19 | William Lion McKenzie Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Canada Program, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. |
| 2018 | (Declined) Post-Doctoral Award, Fonds de recherche du Québec (Société et Culture). |
| 2016 | \$4000 project grant from "Amplifier Montréal." |
| 2015-18 | Doctoral Award, Fonds de recherche du Québec (Société et Culture). |
| 2015-18 | Supplemental Doctoral Award, "Action concertée sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale," Fonds de recherche du Québec (Société et Culture). |
| 2015 | \$6500 research grant, Observatoire sur les profilages, University of Montreal. |
| 2009 | \$20,000 research grant, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Quebec. |
| 1993 | CIDA Awards for Canadians, Canadian Bureau for International Education. |
| 1998 | Dean's Honours List, McGill University. |

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer

Race and Public Policy in Comparative Perspective (Spring 2018)
Inequality, Poverty, and Social Policy in the United States (Summer 2013)

Teaching Assistant

Introduction to Sociology
Introduction of Social Policy: Baltimore and Beyond
Research Methods
Political Sociology

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Livingstone, A., and Weinfeld, M. 2017. "Black students and high school completion in Quebec and Ontario: A multi-variate analysis." *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 54 (2): 174-197.
- Livingstone, A., and Weinfeld, M. 2015. "Black families and socio-economic inequality in Canada: Changes from 1986 to 2006." *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 47 (3): 1-24.
- Livingstone, A., Celemencki, J., and Calixte, M. 2014. "Youth Participatory Action Research and school improvement: The missing voices of black youth in Montreal." *Canadian Journal of Education*, 37 (1): 283-307.
- Wright, R., Lindsay, J., Livingstone, A., Shepperd, N., and Duku, E. 2007. "Effects of school-based interventions on secondary school students with high and low risks for antisocial behaviour." *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 22 (1): 32-49.
- Wright, R., John, L., Allaggia, R., and Livingstone, A. 2006. After-school arts programs in low-income communities: Qualitative experiences of youth, parents and staff. *Intervention*, 124.

Manuscripts in Preparation

- Livingstone, A. "Black political mobilization and policy-making in Canada."
- Livingstone, A., Rutland, T., and Alix, Stéphane. "Racial profiling in street-level encounters between the police and youth in Montreal: A qualitative study."

Book Chapters

- Livingstone, A., and Weinfeld, M. 2017. "Black families and socio-economic inequality in Canada: Changes from 1986 to 2006." Pp. 129-152 in *Immigration, Racial and Ethnic*

Studies in 150 Years of Canada: Retrospects and Prospects, edited by Lloyd Wong and Shibao Guo. Leiden, London: Brill Sense.

Lamarre, P., Livingstone, A., and Langevin, P. 2014. "The Community Learning Centre Initiative for English schools in Quebec: Findings from a process-based evaluation." Pp. 311-330 in *Plaidoyer pour une école communautaire / Making a case for community schools*, edited by N. Trépanier. Montreal, QC: Éditions Nouvelles.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Livingstone, A. 2017. "Racial politics and social policy in urban Canada." Presented at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Sociological Association, May 29-June 1, Toronto, Ontario.

Livingstone, A. 2017. "Racial profiling and policing in Montreal: Findings from a Participatory Action Project." Presented at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Sociological Association, May 29-June 1, Toronto, Ontario.

Livingstone, A. 2017. "Racial politics and social policy in urban Canada." Presented at a Roundtable of the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, August 12-15, Montreal, Quebec.

Livingstone, A., Abidou, Z., Guillaume, W., Harim, R., M-K, Milien, et Rémé, L. 2016. "On a reçu un appel: Le profilage racial vécu par les jeunes dans le quartier Saint-Michel à Montréal." Presented at the annual student conference of the "Centre d'études ethniques des universités montréalaises," University of Montreal, March 16-18, Montreal, Quebec.

Rutland, R., Livingstone, A., Abidou, Z., Guillaume, W., Harim, R., M-K, Milien, et Rémé, L. 2016. "On a reçu un appel: Le profilage racial vécu par les jeunes dans le quartier Saint-Michel à Montréal." Presented at a conference entitled, "Dérives Sécuritaires et Profilage" of the "Observatoire sur les profilages," University of Montreal, February 18-19, Montreal, Quebec.

Livingstone, A., and Weinfeld, M. 2013. "Black families and socio-economic inequality in Canada: Changes from 1986 to 2006." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Population Society, June 5-6, Victoria, B.C.

Lamarre, P., and Livingstone, A. 2010. "Evaluation and lessons learned from the Community Learning Centre Project." Presented at the annual conference of the "Association francophone pour le savoir" (ACFAS), February 22-25, Montreal, Quebec.

Livingstone, A., and Celemencki, J. 2010. "Participatory research project with black high school students in Montreal." Presented at "Understanding, Unlearning and Addressing Bias in Society," Canadian Race Relations Foundation, May 17-19, Montreal, Quebec.

- Livingstone, A., Celemencki, J., Calixte, M., and Kofi-Duah, G. 2009. "Preliminary findings from the participatory research project with black youth: Black Communities Demographic Project." Presented at the "Colloque sur la réussite scolaire des jeunes issus de l'immigration," Université de Québec à Montréal, November 5-6, Montreal, Quebec.
- Langevin, P., Livingstone, A., and Beattie, N. 2008. "The Community Learning Centre Project of the Ministry of Education, Leisure, and Sports." Presented at the "Colloque sur la réussite éducative" of the "Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative du Québec," April 16-18, Quebec, Quebec.
- Livingstone, A., Sandoval, D., Mondestin, N., and Brunal, A. 2006. "The experiences of black Canadians in Montreal." Annual Meeting of the Association of Black Sociologists, August 8-10, Montreal, Quebec.

RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2006-2010 | <i>Evaluation Coordinator and Assistant Project Manager</i> Community Learning Centres Initiative Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Montreal, Quebec. |
| 2007-2010 | <i>Research Associate</i> Black Communities Demographic Project Consortium for Ethnicity and Strategic Social Planning, McGill University |
| 2006-2007 | <i>Evaluation Consultant</i> J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Montreal, Quebec. |
| 2004-2006 | <i>Research Assistant</i> National Arts and Youth Demonstration Project School of Social Work, McGill University |
| 2001-2004 | <i>Researcher and Member</i> Coopérative de travail Interface, Montreal, Quebec |
| 1999-2000 | <i>Technical Officer and Speech Writer</i> Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, Geneva, Switzerland. |
| 1998-1999 | <i>Program Officer</i> United Nations Population Fund, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. |
| 1995-1996 | <i>Evaluation Consultant</i> Farm Implements and Tools Programme (TOOL Consult), Accra, Ghana. |

RESEARCH REPORTS

- Livingstone, A. 2005. "Evaluation of the first-year implementation of the Canadian Association for Community Service Learning." Montreal, Quebec: J.W. McConnell Family Foundation.
- Livingstone, A.M., Chagnon, L., Burch, J., Conn, M., Belleau, J., Frank, F., Vallée, and the Women's CED Network. 2004. "From poverty to empowerment: A research report on women and Community Economic Development (CED) in Canada." Toronto, Ontario: Canadian's Women Foundation.
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- Livingstone, A., and Chagnon, L. 2003. "Exemplary practices in the financing and resourcing of the voluntary sector in Quebec." Montreal, Quebec: Coopérative de travail Interface. "
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